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THE GREAT HOUSES

OF

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE,

AND THE

COUNTY FAMILIES,

BY LEONARD JACKS.



NOTTINGHAM:

W. AND A. S. BRADSHAW, PELHAM STREET AND VICTORIA STREET.

PREFACE.



Few words are needed to introduce this little volume either to those who have been kind enough to subscribe to it or to those of the public into whose hands it may chance to fall. The contents comprise a number of articles that have appeared at intervals of more or less duration in the columns of *The Nottingham Journal*, a paper with which the writer has been intimately connected for a number of years.

It has been suggested at various times by the writer's friends and by others that the articles were worthy of being rescued from the fate which ordinarily awaits the ephemeral literature of a public journal, and that their re-publication in a more enduring form might be welcome. Yielding to this kindly suggestion the writer has at length decided to place the articles in the hands of the publisher, and to attach his name to what he has written, (often, he is afraid, with too little care, and certainly with, until lately no idea, that his work would appear in book form), to suit the requirements of a Daily Newspaper.

Several of the articles have been necessarily abridged, and the writer regrets that owing to the destruction of the material which he collected on the occasion of his earlier visits, he is unable to give to the series the added value which perhaps his maturer judgment would suggest.

The writer feels that in many cases scant justice has been done to the places he has endeavoured to describe and to the associations which he has striven to recall, but in the event of an adverse verdict concerning his book he has the satisfaction of looking back upon a series of visits which owing in a great measure to the kindness he has experienced at the hands of the Nobility and Gentry of the County, have represented the pleasantest part of his professional duties.

December, 1881,

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ANNESLEY.

WHEN Mr. Musters is not angling for Dee salmon in Aberdeenshire, or engaged with rod and line upon the banks of some swirling Norwegian river, he will most probably be at his charming seat nestled amongst the trees of Annesley Park, for Wiverton sees but little of him, and Colwick less. Fifty years ago William Howitt, whose rural sketches are as familiar to some as those of Washington Irving and scarcely less interesting, visited Annesley Hall, and found it forsaken, neglected, and ghostly, by reason of the deep desolateness which possessed its grey walls, silent courtyard, and unkempt gardens.

O'er all there hung a shadow and a fear,
A sense of mystery the spirit daunted.

"This was once the abode of a prosperous old family," says the writer just mentioned, "but a blight and a sorrow have fallen here." A change has taken place at Annesley Hall since this description was written. It is now the abode of a "prosperous old family;" of one of the largest landowners in the county; a genuine sportsman, and a true gentleman, who now, having given up at a tolerably early age all active participation in the national sport, still takes the liveliest interest in everything concerning it. The desolation has long since been dispelled by the going to and fro of friends and dependents, the happy voices of children, who are rapidly growing up into manhood and womanhood, and by the sunshine of home life. But the memory of one sad incident will cling to Annesley so long as a single stone of that old hall stands. It was here that Lord Byron, always morbidly sensitive, but ere yet he had acquired that spirit of deep and settled melancholy, that love of self-accusation, which pervades much of his splendid poetry, bade farewell to Mary Chaworth. The spot where that last sad interview took place is still pointed out, and the spirit of Byron continues to haunt the seclusion of Annesley. "Had I married Miss Chaworth perhaps the whole tenor of my life would have been different," wrote the poet, and there was doubtless a deep meaning in the words. It was at Annesley that these two met as lovers; it was there that the incident which inspired "The Dream," and which imparted a painful lustre to many of Lord Byron's minor poems, occurred. Surely in this parting there was "an image of Death"—death of purest affection and tenderest attachment. If one is not sufficiently reminded of this interesting farewell scene by a mere sight of the grey

and ivy-covered walls of Annesley, there are some small things treasured up in the old drawing-room—the most interesting room in the whole house—which serve to bring it to one's memory. Here are preserved a couple of exquisite miniatures of Mary Chaworth herself, one painted when the subject was sixteen years of age, and the other after her marriage with Mr. John Musters. These are carefully placed in a glass case along with other little treasures. The young heiress must have been very beautiful, and from the look of that miniature face one would be inclined to say that the description which attributes to her a disposition the most amicable and attracting is not overdrawn. The features are small and beautifully rounded ; the expression is of exquisite sweetness.

Among the treasures of Annesley, and carefully preserved under a frame of glass, is the original of that pretty fragment written by Lord Byron after the marriage of Miss Chaworth—

Hills of Annesley ! bleak and barren,
Where my thoughtless childhood strayed,
How the northern tempests warring,
Howl above thy tufted shade.
Now no more the hours beguiling,
Former favourite haunts I see,
Now no more my Mary smiling,
Makes ye seem a heaven to me.

The lines are legibly written in pencil with the signature of Lord Byron affixed. The document is in an excellent state of preservation. Of the other things which serve to remind one of Byron's connection with this place is a modern picture by Mr. Ward, R.A., on one of the staircases, in which the poet, his handsome face bearing a look of anything but appreciation—he might be in just such a mood as that which possessed him when he wrote "The Waltz"—is looking through one of the windows of Annesley at some festivity which is going on inside. Through the partially open casement you can see that it is a dance, and probably the lady with so much floating colour about her is Mary Chaworth ; equally probable it is that the red-coated squire who is treading the mazes of the waltz with her is her future husband.

The Annesley estate came into the hands of Lord Chaworth, an Irish peer, by the marriage of one of his ancestors with Alice de Annesley, in the reign of Henry VI. Up to this time it had been held by the Annesleys, a family who gave the estate its present name. By the Chaworth-Musters marriage it passed into the hands of the Musters family, who assumed the additional name of Chaworth, and have held it since. Annesley then boasts great antiquity. Annesley Hall is, I should think, pretty much what it was in Byron's time, the only addition to the building made by the present owner, being a wing built for family requirements. The stonework of the fine front

is concealed by ivy of many, many years growth, and at the side over-looking the park a gigantic Virginia Creeper stretches wide-spreading, sturdy trailers bearing a profusion of dark red leaves in autumn. The approach to the hall is through a spacious park, with whose grand old trees and fine herd of deer many people who take their walks abroad are familiar. To get to the hall you have to pass through the portals of the "massy gate" which stood there in Byron's day, and there is no cause to be afraid of a great handsome staghound which comes bounding towards you in playful curves. There are several of these beautiful hounds about the house, and they enjoy special privileges. The central hall is full of objects of interest. It has an unmistakeably ancient look. The furniture is old, the pictures on the walls are old, the deerskins which cover the floor are getting the worse for wear, the great jack boots which hang over the ancient fireplace, were made by no modern shoemaker, and the jerkin which is suspended beside them is evidently the work of a mediæval tailor. The great boots and the old garment with the ancient weapons which are hung up here are said to have belonged to that eccentric outlaw whose existence has never yet been satisfactorily established—Robin Hood. On the walls are some family portraits representing ancestors, in the costumes which marked different periods, including Mr. Mundy Musters, of Colwick, who, so far as I know, did not distinguish himself in any particular line. In this apartment is kept the delicate bladed, finely tempered, handsomely mounted sword with which Sir John Byron is said to have killed Mr. Chaworth in a famous duel that has become a matter of history. The picture of that unfortunate gentleman, with his pale face and melancholy expression is hung in another part of the house. The strong quaint looking iron rails which guard the staircases, were not forged in any existing furnace. Ascending the staircase, and passing Ward's picture of Lord Byron to which attention has already been called, and some more family portraits, one obtains access to the old drawing room. Two great staghounds are enjoying the comfort of this very comfortable apartment; one is curled up in canine ease upon the sofa and the other is studying the figuring of the Dutch tiles which ornament a fireplace of gigantic proportions, and which on this chill autumn morning contains a bright, warm fire. The massive doorway contains one of those rare specimens of wood-carving which are sometimes to be met with in old country mansions, though there are few houses hereabouts that can boast such a specimen as this. It was executed by some clever carver in the reign of Charles II. at the instigation, it is said, of Lord Chaworth, the then lord of the manor. The ceiling is paneled and made dark with cornices of carved wood. The carving is evidently of the same date as that about the entrance. The huge fireplace with its Dutch tiles furnishes further evidence of the antiquity of this chamber. On one

of the sides of the fireplace have been scratched some lines by a long-dead Chaworth. They are so obliterated now as to be undecipherable except by the keenest eyes, but they have been committed to paper and preserved as a curiosity. On Christmas Day, 1669, "Poore Chaworth" thus pours out his sorrows in old English:—

Alas, I finde my poore heart will prove
Too small a vessell for oer flowing love,
Which makes me wish thine eyes so bright had never shine,
Or that thou hadst been from thy cradle blinde.

—POORE CHAWORTH.

Then written, perhaps a little later, by the same hand, guided by serener thoughts—

Juliana de la Fountaine
Is more worth than a goulde mountaine,
The name above
Is her you love.—CHAWORTH.

There are in this old drawing room, besides a large and somewhat faded picture of John the Baptist preaching in the Wilderness, which occupies a considerable space over the fireplace, some family portraits in an excellent state of preservation, for the colours are almost as bright as when the pictures came from the easel. They include paintings of Lady Mary Byron who died in 1703, daughter of the Earl of Bridgwater, of Frances Lady Byron, daughter of William, Earl of Portland. The beautiful little collection of miniatures, the most interesting of which I have already mentioned, are carefully preserved together with other small things each possessing some particular interest of its own. The modern drawing-room down stairs is a very different apartment. It is furnished and fitted as the reception room of a great country house should be; with luxurious settees, and chairs and couches set upon a downy carpet. Its broad casement commands a view of one of the prettiest bits of park scenery in England. Such delightful grassy undulations; hills rising gently in the distance, grand old trees, the growth of centuries, and the gleam of water down in the hollow. There are some water colours of Eastern cities on the wall of the drawing-room, a portrait of Lord Chesterfield, the man of fashion and celebrated wit, in court dress, and one of Lady Howe which bears the one just named close company. The dining-room is a large and handsome apartment, containing several hunting pictures the figures in which are family portraits. The large one over the mantelpiece shows the present owner's grandfather on horseback, with two other gentlemen fully equipped for the chase, and the dogs look anxious to be off. In the corner near the window is the portrait of Mr. John Musters, a handsome man, who died in 1842 at the early age of thirty-four, and near the door one's attention is called to the portrait of a lady—very beautiful she must have been too, who by a single game of cards won a fine estate of several thousand productive acres.

The room is lofty and light as are all the other principle rooms in this old house. The speediest way of getting to the gardens is by traversing a grand old flagged terrace, flanked all along by a high wall covered with creeping plants which grow in the sweetest confusion. Here it is said Lord Byron used to practice pistol firing, probably to the terror of Miss Chaworth. The terrace is ornamented by a balcony of stone, coloured in many places by lichens and mosses, and bearing in the centre of its length a stone urn on which is carved the escutcheon of the Chaworths. Two broad flights of steps terminating the terrace, bring you into the gardens where there are little paths leading into the most delicious solitudes. It is worth a visit to Annesley to be allowed to wander amongst the splendid shrubs which so thickly stud this portion of the estate; masses of bright green—sturdy bay, and lusty laurels, which latter look like so many leafy wigwams. It is very quiet in these garden solitudes, on this still October morning, when the only sound to be heard is the crackling of the crisp reddish brown leaves, which strew the paths, and the occasional shrilly note of the robin.

It is a fine old place this Annesley Hall, the principal seat of Mr. John Chaworth Musters, the owner of 8,000 broad acres in Nottinghamshire, and everywhere deservedly popular. A thorough sportsman and an English gentleman; that is how I should describe Mr. Musters, of Annesley Park. One of the best riders across country he has been in his day, and every sportsman in the county was sorry enough when he withdrew from the chase, now some years ago, as the tenant farmers of Nottinghamshire felt sorry when he severed his active connection with the Chamber of Agriculture, because he could not conscientiously lend himself to a course which that body proposed to pursue. As master of the Quorn, a post which none but a wealthy man and a sportsman versed in every movement of the chase could possibly undertake, with any hope of success, he won that peculiar and enviable popularity which attaches to a successful master of foxhounds, and later as master of the South Nottinghamshire, a pack which, under his sway, became scarcely less famous than the Leicestershire one, he gained the esteem of every lover of the hunt in the county.

The Annesley property as we have seen, came into the family by marriage. The Colwick estate, on which the family so long resided, was purchased by Sir John Musters, of Hornsey, who was knighted at Whitehall in 1663. Wiverton Hall, which also belongs to Mr. Musters, was formerly a house of considerable size and importance, was included in the vast possessions of the Chaworths. It became their property in the reign of Edward III., and remained with the family until the Chaworth-Musters marriage, when it went to the Musters' together with all the other extensive possessions of the Chaworths.

BABWORTH.

SOME of the most delightful scenery in the county is about Babworth. It is as varied as it is beautiful. From one point, close to the house, the eye travels over a bit of open landscape, with a foreground of thriving trees, and further away the crown of gently swelling hills. Looking across the bright and gracefully designed gardens, either from the terrace or from the windows inside, one catches the shimmer of water—of a large and pellucid lake, on the other side of which rises a picturesque bank of sandstone, completely covered with rich foliage, save in one or two places where the red of the sandstone peeps out from the thick mass of leaves and branches, acquiring a still ruddier tint in the light of the summer sun. A skilful artist might make a charming picture out of those trees and those bits of sandstone rock, with the lake and the sedges, and the bright emerald of fertile pasturage in front.

Anyone who has visited the home of the Bridgeman-Simpsons will have been struck with the singular beauty of the place and its surroundings. Nature and art have here allied their gentle forces to produce a scene of almost surpassing sweetness. The red sandstone rock, with its sylvan burden is Nature's ; the water has been made to accumulate in a graceful sheet by artificial means. In the laying out of the pleasure grounds, which are marvels of picturesqueness, Nature has been aided by art, but the former offers splendid facilities for the operation of the latter, and the result could not be more satisfactory. A more agreeable association of natural scenery with artificial embellishments it would be difficult to meet with, and on all grounds—on account of its situation, of its natural advantages, of the size and character of its house, of the repute of the family that has long possessed it, and of the broad acres by which it is surrounded, Babworth deserves to take a prominent place among the great houses of the county. It is not a little remarkable that a house like this should exist in such a locality. Babworth is but one mile removed from Retford, a town of considerable dimensions, which if it does not boast a staple trade, is at any rate a by no means insignificant centre of activity. And within a few hundred yards walk of some of its dwellings, is a house possessing a seclusion as perfect as though it were situated in the depths of some primeval forest, and surrounded by scenery which is as unsuggestive of urban life as is the deer-haunted bracken of Sherwood. It is as noiseless, as secluded, and as solitary, by the side of that pretty sheet of water

at the foot of the sandstone rock, as it is in the quiet precincts of the little church at Babworth, approached from the house by shaded walks which no sound enters.

The hall at Babworth, a solid handsome building of red brick relieved by white stone dressings, is, and has been for a considerable period the residence of the Simpsons—the Bridgeman-Simpsons now, and I suppose hereafter. For many years Simpson has followed Simpson at the hall, and Simpson Simpson at the rectory—the latter a large and commodious building not more than two hundred yards removed from the hall. The first of the family who resided at Babworth was Mr. William Simpson, of Sheffield, son of Launcelot of that name, somewhere about the end of the seventeenth century. John Simpson, who was born in 1668, resided at Stoke Hall, in Derbyshire, and married a daughter of the famous Admiral Benbow, by whom he had one surviving daughter who married Sir Henry Bridgeman, afterwards created Earl of Bradford. In 1785 the Babworth estate descended to the Hon. John Bridgeman, who took the surname and arms of Simpson. This gentleman was succeeded by a son of his second wife, Mr. Henry Bridgeman-Simpson, who in 1830 married the daughter of Mr. Henry Baring, brother to Lord Ashburton, the lady who now owns the estate, and to whose courtesy and kindness I am indebted for what information I possess about this truly charming place. Babworth gives the name to a parish of considerable extent, the inhabited portions of which are removed from the house. It is pretty certain that for a very long period a house of considerable size and consequence has existed there. Less than half a century ago the present mansion was built to supply the place of an old building, which is said to have been extremely commodious, but somewhat ugly externally. So that the present mansion, so far as the exterior is concerned, may be described as a modern structure. In the interior some of the older features are still to be observed, and there are a number of family portraits and other things up and down the house, which tell of its antiquity. Among the more recent of the portraits is an excellent one of the Hon. John Bridgeman, son of Lord Bradford, who died in 1850, and who took possession at the death of Mr. Lindley Simpson, in 1785. This gentleman, whose portrait hangs in the billiard room, was a man of considerable taste, and made several improvements on the estate and in the house. He it was who enlarged the lake, having previously made a successful appeal to the county magistrates to effect a deviation in the course of a public highway that ran from Retford to Worksop, which he did at considerable cost to himself. This gentleman was succeeded by his son, Mr. Henry Bridgeman-Simpson, who, in the costume usually worn by country gentlemen of a more modern school, occupies a prominent place among the family portraits at Babworth, where he lived so long. Of these portraits there are a great number in

different parts of the house, and some fine faces are to be seen amongst them—handsome men and beautiful women, who in their day have been influential members of a refined and cultivated society, and who have enjoyed the pleasures of opulence and position. These canvases, which go back to the seventeenth century, throw some light upon the history of the family—how it came to acquire a compound name, and from whence its wives have been selected. In these halls one is reminded of the Stringers, who formerly lived at Eaton, in the neighbourhood of Retford, and at Sutton-cum-Lound, and who are connected by marriage not only with the Simpsons, but with the Eyres, the Souths, the Copleys, the Worsleys (Earls of Yarborough), and the Fitzwilliams. One of them fought bravely for his country, and was a distinguished naval officer. The last action in which he was engaged was off Carthegena, between the English and French fleets, in 1782, under Admiral Benbow, whose granddaughter was espoused to the Rev. John Simpson. In the house is a drinking tankard which was used by the Admiral, and which accompanied him through all his naval engagements. It came into the family by the marriage of the Admiral's daughter to Sir Henry Bridgeman, in 1735. In the engagement above referred to, Mr. Stringer received wounds from which he never recovered, and he died in Jamaica at the close of the year. There is also a portrait of the first Lord Bradford, which reminds one of the connection of the Babworth family with that of Bridgeman, of which the present Earl of Bradford is the head. The Hon. John Bridgeman, to whom the Babworth estate descended on the death of Mr. Lindley Simpson in 1785, was of a family formerly settled in Devonshire for several successive centuries, one of them having been Sheriff of that county in 1578. Subsequently a branch of the family, now represented by the Earl of Bradford, nephew of the Mr. Simpson who died in 1850, settled at Great Lever, in Lancashire. A son of Edward Bridgeman, who was High-Sheriff of Devonshire in 1578, became bishop of Chester, and the eldest of this prelate's five sons, named Orlando, successively became Lord Chief Baron of the Exchequer, Lord Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, and afterwards Lord Chancellor. The third son was consecrated Bishop of the Isle of Man, in 1671. These scraps of family history are suggested by the portraits which are distributed over Babworth Hall, and which include Simpsons, Bridgemans, Stringers, and Bridgeman-Simpsons. But interesting as many of these portraits undoubtedly are, it is pleasant to turn from the contemplation of unknown features which have become somewhat dimmed in course of time, to brighter scenes which a deft hand, a trained eye, and a tender appreciation of the beautiful, are capable of perpetuating. It is pleasant to turn from the strange faces in the dining room and hall to a beautiful collection of water colours with which the walls of the drawing room, and of a brightly furnished

ante-room, and of other parts of the house, are liberally covered. Every picture in this interesting and almost endless collection, which represents an immense amount of patient toil and graceful labour, is the work of Mrs. Bridgeman-Simpson, the lady who at the present time owns this charming and extensive North Nottinghamshire estate. This lady is a great traveller; she is away for months together, and these are the sunny memories of her travels. Several charming pictures there are of the beautiful scenery of Sicily—of its seaport capital, with its numerous domes and spires, and the lofty hills by which it is surrounded. With the beauties of the largest island in the Mediterranean Mrs. Bridgeman-Simpson has made herself acquainted, and she has looked upon them with the eye of an artist. She has reproduced some of the most interesting scenes to be met with at Palermo, and has searched beyond the confines of the capital for material wherewith to make those bright water-colours which now adorn the walls at Babworth. Mrs. Bridgeman-Simpson has visited the ruined temples of Girgenti, where once stood the famous city of Agrigentum, and one of them, that of Castor and Pollux, has been admitted to this beautiful collection. An animated scene, as it appeared from the windows of a hotel at Innspruck, the Tyrolese capital, with its houses of limestone breccia, forms the subject of a clever and spirited drawing, and the citadel of strongly fortified Corfu has been treated with the same consummate skill. Castles in the lovely country of the Moselle; Egyptian architecture at Cairo; temples in Sicily; lakes in Italy, and, coming nearer home, the banks and braes of Scotland and the sweet landscapes of Devon have been sketched and developed by this gifted lady, whose travels have taken her to some of the brightest spots in Europe. I have specially mentioned a few of these pictures, or rather their subjects, because they form a remarkable collection. They are works of art of a very high order; they have been inspected and scrutinised by distinguished persons, and I learn that they have been made heirlooms, in such esteem have they been held. If this is so, Mrs. Bridgeman-Simpson has been deprived of the pleasure she would have had in presenting some of her exquisite work to intimate friends, but the proviso which keeps them in the family, will secure to the house of Bridgeman-Simpson a collection of paintings that will not only make their possessors familiar with scenes which perhaps they may never visit, but will serve to remind after generations of the talented and gracious lady who now owns the estate.

BESTWOOD LODGE.

A PERSON straying from the high road to Mansfield at a point beyond the village of Daybrook might by accident find himself in one of the paths intersecting a thickly wooded plantation of youthful firs both of the Scotch, Corsican, and Australian varieties, which have approached as near to Bestwood Lodge as they well can do without violating the laws of consistency. It is just possible that such a person pursuing the sinuous pathway, if he happened to wander here during certain periods of the year, might chance to come upon a gentleman, attired in a suit of grey, somewhat determinedly engaged with a long-shafted instrument, in putting an end to the existence of occasional thistles and other noxious weeds which cumber the soil. Such an apparition would scarcely alarm him ; there would be nothing extraordinary in such a spectacle. But if the wanderer were suddenly told that the solitary gardener, the thoughtful looking, trim bearded, grey suited gentleman, was the Hereditary Registrar of the Court of Chancery, the Hereditary Grand Falconer of England, was in short his Grace the Duke of St. Albans, he would in all probability feel somewhat surprised and certainly he might reasonably come to the conclusion that he had lost his way. To us, who know very little of the home life of the highest in the land the spectacle of a noble duke hoeing thistles and thinning his own plantations, seems very strange. But it is well known that many of those who belong to the aristocracy of birth, and to the aristocracy of genius employ their leisure time in the simplest ways. A late territorial magnate possessing half a dozen titles has a great fancy for being amongst his workmen ; the late Sir Robert Peel was fond of rolling his own grassplot ; Mr. Gladstone found recreation in felling big trees, and other distinguished men, when at home spend much of their time in the simplest pursuits. The Duke of St. Albans, during his residence at Bestwood, which is never of long duration, spends very little time indoors. He has the most charming study or private room, containing a small collection of good solid literature, but you won't find him there when the weather is anything like fine. It is a room of fairly large proportions and though readily accessible from all the other principal rooms on the ground floor, it is always perfectly still and you cannot hear a sound of what is going on outside its walls. Its paneled ceiling would give it a sombre look were it not for the abundant light let in through a tall handsome window against which

the stirred leaves of a creeping plant flutter. His Grace when he is writing can almost see what is going on in Nottingham. The outlook is right across the ducal park and cricket ground to Nottingham. It is a prettily furnished cosy room, full of various *articles de luxe*. The walls are not overloaded with pictures, but they contain perhaps the most prized works in his grace's collection. Here is a recent portrait of the present Duchess from the brush of one of the most distinguished modern artists, representing her grace in a simple black high dress, relieved by just one scarlet flower fastened at the throat. There is here a portrait of the late duke, a large painting of Redbourne,—his grace's Lincolnshire seat, in which are the figures of two ladies in a small pony carriage who are holding converse with a substantial ecclesiastic of the old school, just dismounted from a stout cob. In the background is Redbourne Church, half concealed by autumnal foliage. Over a handsome barometer clock, which occupies a goodly portion of the mantelpiece, is an elaborately-carved frame containing a portrait of some Spanish beauty; the eyes are dark and soft, and the complexion is delicate olive. His Grace is always bringing home something beautiful from abroad, and that long table against the wall is covered with all kinds of little nick-knacks. Some of these have come from far distant climes. Here too are some few family treasures, including a small illumination painted by the late duchess, and containing a vignette of her whose memory still lives, and the likenesses of some of her relatives. The bright coil of golden hair of such silky texture, carefully preserved under glass and set in an oval frame of dark blue velvet, on which is inscribed in golden letters, the word "Cuckoo," was once worn by the duke's eldest daughter, Lady Louisa Beauclerk.

Bestwood Lodge is in all respects a fit residence for a nobleman of the highest rank, and its historical associations are most interesting. History relates that Bestwood was once a Royal residence, much used for hunting purposes. King Edward III. issued certain letters patent, dated, "at his Park at Bestwood," in 1364, and earlier still, Henry I. granted to the Priory of Lenton permission to have "two carts to fetch dead wood and heath out of Bestwood." Henry II., about the year 1160, granted the convent to have every day "two carts, or carrettes, to bring them dead wood or heath, as much as they should need for their own use." From the same source we learn that in 1329, Bestwood was granted by Edward III. to Richard de Strelley for his life. This monarch on the 22nd of February, 1335, also granted to Richard de Strelley "all the dry bruches, which in English were then called slovens or stubbs, within the Hay of Bestwood." Bestwood has long been the seat of nobility. It has been in the hands of three Earls of Rutland; before then a celebrated courtier in the reign of Elizabeth, Thomas

Markham, by name, had it, and earlier still it was the residence of Sir John Byron, one of Henry the Eighth's favourites. In 1683, the Second Charles, by royal letters patent, granted the park at Bestwood to Henry Beauclerk, Duke of St. Albans, and it has since that date remained in the hands of the Beauclerks, who have at various times united themselves with some of the oldest houses in England. The first duke for instance married the sole heiress of the last Earl of Oxford. The eighth duke married the heiress of Mr. Carter Thelwall, of Redbourne Hall, and subsequently the heiress of Mr. John Nelthorpe, of Little Grimsby Hall, which marriage accounts for the acquisition of the 5,000 acres owned by the Beauclerks in Lincolnshire. The situation of the present mansion, which was completed but a very few years ago, is one of the finest in the county, so far as elevation is concerned, and though only about four miles from a large manufacturing town it occupies a perfectly retired position, and its privacy is as securely maintained as though it stood twenty miles from any seat of industry. Standing on its broad terrace when the lights are lit at Nottingham you might almost fancy that the town was only a stone's throw from that high eminence. It is built in the domestic style of architecture which distinguished the fourteenth century, from the designs of a celebrated London architect, Mr. S. S. Teuton, and it forms a very handsome and conspicuous object from many points. The flower beds in front of the terrace are arranged in a kind of semi-circle, and below is a lawn of exquisite softness sloping down to the edge of the park. There are some large trees in the neighbourhood of the lawn-tennis ground, and these are allowed to grow as they will. They are really the only few old trees on the estate, and His grace likes to see their tall leafy forms. The duke is a great admirer of trees; firs are his special favourites, and he himself has introduced a fine variety from Corsica which mingle well with their sturdy brethren of Scotch extraction. The large plantations which occupy a considerable portion of the estate, are composed almost exclusively of firs which when they reach maturity will form a fine forest. A large strip of the kitchen garden is devoted to the development of the young trees which are perpetually being transplanted for the enlargement of the covers. His Grace is a great lover of unconventional nature, and he is the careful protector of woody vegetation. He will not have his trees and shrubs trimmed and lopped. The few gorse bushes which are left to indicate the remote existence of forest land, he preserves inviolate, and laurel, bay, blackberry, and gorse grow up together on the Bestwood domain.

The laws of comfort and convenience have been carefully studied in the internal arrangement of Bestwood Lodge, and the furniture and fittings of the fine large rooms bespeak the owner to be a man of refined and cultivated taste. To the central hall light is

admitted through a lofty glass dome, and the roof is large, massive, and ornamental. It is luxuriantly furnished, and probably its best aspect is seen from the gallery, which is arranged midway between the roof and the floor. There are some family portraits here, one a life size picture representing the duke's three daughters ; the two girls Lady Louise and Lady Sybil are paying attention to a Muscovy duck which has come from the pond on the lawn to be fed, and the boy—Lord Burford is amusing himself with a wooden horse. There is a handsome portrait, painted some time ago I should imagine, of the duke in the green and embroidered dress of grand falconer, and one of the late duchess. There are paintings here of the sixth and eighth dukes, and to the decoration of the room has recently been added a pair of far-spreading antlers, which probably at some remote time belonging to a very fine specimen of the Irish elk—now extinct. The central hall is full of beautiful things and it makes a delightful sitting-room. All the other principal rooms seem to radiate from this hall, and the arrangement is a very convenient one. The drawing-room at Bestwood has an outlook from lofty curtained windows which embraces all the quarters. The pictures here are chiefly portraits of kings and nobles, many of them from the brush of Sir Peter Lely, who painted Charles the First, Charles the Second, and Cromwell. I have sometimes thought I should like to see Lely's portrait of the Protector, in which the painter, in obedience to instructions, represented with perfect accuracy every pimple on that august person's somewhat bibulous countenance. It is not at Bestwood, but this master's portrait of Charles the Second hangs on these walls. Several of the best pictures from this and other rooms were at the time of my visit at the Castle Museum, his Grace having generously allowed the authorities of that institution to make a tolerably copious selection from his walls. There is a good deal of Lely's work at Bestwood. Lely's portraits of women are perhaps unrivalled ; there is a dignity about them which marks them as persons of high rank. There is one here of the notorious Barbara Villiers, Duchess of Cleveland, and another of Elizabeth Noel, Countess of Berkeley, from the brush of this master. There is a beautiful picture in the drawing-room of a recumbent female figure remarkable for the brilliancy of its colouring and for a certain charm of flesh-painting which at once strikes the eye. The general look of the features closely resembles that of a portrait of the beautiful Nell Gwyn which is hung in another part of the house. There are also in this superb drawing-room a couple of portraits of Charles Beauclerk, first Duke of St. Albans, one of them painted when the subject was a child, by Gascar, the French artist, to whom sat James II. when Duke of York ; a portrait of Charles I. in armour, by Jamesone ; a small portrait of the seventeenth Earl of Oxford ; portraits of Diana de Vere, Duchess of St. Albans, daughter of the

twentieth and last Earl of Oxford ; of Lord Aubrey Beauclerk, who was killed at Carthage ; of Lord Amelius Beauclerk, a distinguished naval officer, the only ancestor of the Duke's who ever made Bestwood his home ; and of the first Earl of Berkely. In one of the window recesses I noticed three little gems which are worthy, and perhaps have by this time, a more prominent position. The centre one is a tiny landscape by the younger Teniers—a moonlight scene, “touched with a spirit,” and displaying that silvery charm with which this great painter invested all his best known landscapes. Of the others, one is a Fragonard, and the other a good specimen of Rottenhamer's delicate colouring. The mantel-pieces in this room, as in the dining-room, are of marble, inlaid with mosaic work, executed by Italian artists, and near one of them stand a couple of crayon drawings, one of Lady Diana Huddleston, which at one time graced the state cabin of his Grace's yacht, but which now makes one of a pair of pretty screens. There are all sorts of beautiful things in the drawing-room. There are cabinets of ornamental china, and wondrous little china ornaments, chiefly figures of foreign make, most of them brought from Spain. In one of these cabinets may be seen placed upon a handsome mount, a small wooden doll, which at some early period of its existence has gone through a course of harsh treatment, for its limbs are imperfect and charred, as though it had accidentally fallen into the fire. The mount is inscribed as follows :—“This doll was worn by Albert Edward Prince of Wales on his return from seeing the Derby run in 1865. And there was much ado about nothing in consequence.” The dining-room is of fairly large proportions, and perhaps it is the pannelled ceiling of darkly stained wood which gives it a somewhat darkened aspect. There is here a bust by Roubiliac, of Wilks, the founder of the Beef Steak Club, and an oval Magdelene over the mantel piece, which almost reminds one of some of Lely's efforts. The billiard-room, the foundation stone of which was laid by Earl Cadogan, who was at Eton with the noble duke, is just what a billiard-room should be. It is lofty, cheerful, and perfectly ventilated, containing some half-dozen pictures, including one of her Majesty's ship *Dryad*, of 36 guns, captured by Lord Amelius Beauclerk, and bringing to close action the French frigate *Proserpine* ; some oriental figures which his Grace has brought from abroad, and other appropriate articles of decoration. All these rooms, the drawing-room, the dining-room, the billiard-room, and the study are closely associated with each other. They are all on one basement, and the means of communication between one and the other is admirably arranged. The conservatory is connected with the house, and without walking ten yards you find yourself under a spacious glass roof enclosing palms and trees of luxuriant growth, with creepers bearing deep purple flowers ; the banana tree of Abyssinia, and the beautiful feathery


papyrus which grows more luxuriantly here than I have ever observed it grow elsewhere. At the extreme end of the conservatory is a sort of rockery arranged in a form of an alcove in which is placed a beautiful white marble statue of "the two sisters." The expression on the young faces is exquisitely sweet, and the limbs are gracefully and delicately rounded. The arrangement of the up-stair rooms, to reach which you have to pass a large oblong picture representing Charles with his retinue going from the tower to Whitehall is as happy as that downstairs. One of these is the *boudoir* of the accomplished duchess—the daughter of Mr. Bernal Osborne. The walls are fairly covered with some choice water-colours, chiefly small landscapes, and the carpet of the softest fibre is of dark blue, dotted with designs of a paler hue. Her grace has had some of the pictures hung in a somewhat novel manner; four or five of the smaller ones are fastened together in the form of a cross. Distributed through these upper rooms are several excellent little paintings from the brush of her grace's sister, Mrs. Blake, who is not an unfrequent visitor at Bestwood.

The little church at Bestwood is associated with the memory of the late duchess, for the massive tombstone of solid granite, surrounded by a narrow bed of flowers, at the west end marks her resting place, and the two beautiful little stained windows and the marble medallion, carved by Royal hands, serve to put one in mind of her who was loved so well. The altar cloth, embroidered with genuine artistic taste, is the work of a "vanished hand," and the cloth covering the kneeling place at the Communion Table, is another specimen of the late duchess' pious industry. It is a very pretty church with an apsidal end, and when the duke and his family are at Bestwood they regularly attend the services.

Princes have been entertained at Bestwood, twice within a period of four years. In 1878 the duke opened his house to the Prince and Princess of Wales when H.R.H. opened the Castle Museum, and in 1881 he entertained the Duke of Albany and a large and distinguished party on the occasion of the opening of the University Buildings. In 1878, the Prince and Princess of Wales, being desirous to leave some memorial of their visit, each planted a tree, which is carefully guarded from harm, near the entrance to the hall. The Duke of St. Albans spends but a very small portion of his time at his charming Nottingham seat. He is very fond of yachting, and he feels healthy breezes when sailing on the blue waters of the Mediterranean. During session he attends assiduously to his Parliamentary duties, and he sometimes rises in his place in the House of Lords to put important questions to the representatives of the Government in the upper chamber. Nor does he always confine himself to putting questions. On one occasion he answered a

somewhat taunting question put to him by the Duke of Richmond, in a manner which must have surprised the then leader of the Conservative party in the Lords, and the House generally. The duke takes an active interest in what concerns the welfare of Nottingham. In her educational, and even in her political organisations—the duke is a Liberal in politics—he takes an interest, and he is always ready to lend his assistance to every good movement. In private life the Duke of St. Albans is no less respected and esteemed than in public. His manners are affable and pleasant to a degree, and whether at a race meeting, a cricket match, or at a social gathering, his geniality and easy courtesy win the esteem of those with whom he comes in contact.

BRAMCOTE HALL. THE SMITHS.

HE Smiths, though the surname they bear is by no means an uncommon one, and might be answered to either by a Cabinet Minister or by the man who sells apples at street corners, are a family of considerable consequence and distinction, as I shall presently show. They have at one time or another furnished twenty-two members to the Legislature (eighteen Smiths, one Bromley, and three Caringtons). Seven of them sat in the House of Commons in one Parliament, facts the like of which I venture to think would not be disclosed by a most diligent study of the history of most other county families. I am speaking now of the family to which the late Member for North Nottinghamshire belongs, and not of legislators who through bearing the same name are not connected with him by ties of relationship. One of them, Robert Smith, was elevated to the Peerage of Ireland in 1796, as Baron Carington, of Bulcote Lodge, and a year later to that of Great Britain under the same title, of Upton, in this county. Robert Smith was the friend of Pitt, and it is not improbable that he was raised to the Upper Chamber in recognition of the influence—numerical, if nothing more—which his family possessed in Parliament. There are no fewer than half-a-dozen branches of the Smith family upon whose coat of arms appear the three demi-griffins that are part of the Carington bearings. There are the Smiths of Woodhall, the Smiths of Sacombe, the Smiths of Selsdon, the Smiths of Dale Park, the Dorrien-Smiths of Tresco Abbey, and the Smiths of Edwalton, who merged into Pauncefotes, of Preston. These are all lineal descendants of a John Smith, of Cropwell Butler, a substantial yeoman who purchased a farm in that South Nottinghamshire village in 1622, from Sir Thomas Hutchinson, of Owthorpe. This, the earliest member of the family of whom there is any record, is supposed to have been the fifth son of George Smith, of Ashby Folville, in Leicestershire, a family of some importance. This, however, is only a matter of conjecture, and therefore not to be taken into account in tracing the descent of the family. The purchaser of Sir Thomas Hutchinson's farm died in 1641, while his eldest son Thomas was yet a minor. The child was placed under the guardianship of a Mr. Burrows, of Nottingham, by whom he was probably apprenticed to Lawrence Collin, a mercer, and a man of note in the town at that time. In 1658 this Thomas Smith bought some premises at the corner of Peck Lane, where he originally carried on the business of a mercer, and at a later period he added a

Bank. Here, then, we have the origin of the oldest country Banking House in England, with which the name of Smith has for generations been connected. The precise date of the establishment of Smith's Bank is not ascertainable, but it was somewhere about the year 1688, during the lifetime of Thomas Smith. Some twelve years after the foundation of the Bank Thomas Smith died, having been twice married, first to Mary, daughter of John Hooper, of Somerset ; and secondly to the daughter of his old master, Lawrence Collin, of Nottingham. During his lifetime he had amassed a large fortune, and he died in 1699 possessed of a good deal of landed property, including an Estate at Gaddesby in Leicestershire, which a short time before belonged to the Carington-Smiths, of Ashby Folville, the adjoining Parish. His eldest Son, Thomas, succeeded him in the Banking business, which had largely developed during the lifetime of its founder, and had now reached some magnitude. In 1717 Mr. Thomas Smith, who had a large stake in Leicestershire, was High Sheriff of that County, and in this year the heraldic arms of the family were granted. Thomas Smith carried on the Bank at Nottingham until his death in 1727, and he was succeeded by his two brothers Samuel and Abel, the former a citizen and goldsmith of London, and of Ashfordby, Leicestershire, and the other of East Stoke, in this county. In addition to the Gaddesby estate Mr. Thomas Smith owned the Manor of Broxtowe, in Nottinghamshire, which was his principal residence. At his death these two estates were sold and the proceeds divided amongst his five daughters. The brother, Samuel, who, as already intimated, became a citizen and goldsmith of London, died intestate in 1751, when his large personal property, amounting to two hundred and forty thousand pounds was divided amongst six children. The younger brother, Abel, remained in Nottingham, and carried on the Bank there. His eldest Son, George, of East Stoke, was created a Baronet in 1757, and the honour passed to the ancestors of Sir Henry Bromley, who now owns that estate. The younger son, Abel, applied himself sedulously to the business of banking, and threw into it a spirit of enterprise which resulted in the very considerable extension of the concern. In or about the year 1757 he established the London Bank, and soon after the Lincoln and Hull Banks, which with one at Derby established, I believe, at a later date, represent the great banking concern belonging to this wealthy and influential family. This enterprising and successful banker and financier represented Aldborough, St. Ives, and St. Germans, in successive Parliaments. His sons were Abel, of Wilford, Nottinghamshire, once M.P. for Nottingham, who died at the age of thirty-one, and whose grandchild Emily, married the late Bishop Wilberforce ; Robert, who was created Baron Carington ; Samuel, of Woodhall, Hertfordshire, formerly M.P. for Leicester, and other sons. Since the establish-

ment of the London bank the elder branches of the Smith family have migrated to the southern counties, and they now hold large estates in Buckinghamshire, Hertfordshire, Kent, and Surrey. They have no estate of importance in Nottinghamshire, though they have been connected with the county for upwards of two hundred years. Mr. Frederic Chatfield Smith, of Bramcote Hall, the head of the Nottingham bank, and a magistrate and deputy-lieutenant for the county of his adoption, belongs to the Smiths of Sacombe, one of the six branches into which this large family is divided. He is the second of the four sons of Mr. Samuel George Smith, of Goldings, Hertfordshire. At one time three of these sons were Members of Parliament, and met on the Conservative side of the House of Commons. These were Mr. S. G. Smith, the elder brother, who represented Aylesbury; Mr. F. C. Smith, who represented North Nottinghamshire; and Mr. Rowland Smith, of Duffield Hall, who represented the Southern division of Derbyshire, for which county he is a magistrate and was High Sheriff, in 1877. The younger brother, who resides at Broxbournebury, in Hertfordshire, assumed by Royal licence the additional surname Bosanquet, that being the name of his father-in-law.

A smaller house standing on the site now occupied by Bramcote Hall, was formerly tenanted by Mr. Wilmot, a connexion of the Chaddesden family, who sold it to Mr. F. C. Smith. The Hall was for a time occupied by Colonel Wright, but he left it and went to Stapleford, a house that has not the advantages of situation possessed by Bramcote. A strong liking for rural life—regarding sweet air, narrow field paths threading pastures bright with the colour of the commonest flowers, or fields of standing corn, from which the smallest wind chafes measured music; lanes that are either dusty or not, according to the humour of the weather, but always interesting in the months of spring and summer, and a host of other wayside charms, as the conditions of such a life—has taken me into most of the villages of this county. Yet with the memory of these visits still fresh and vivid, I cannot name any Nottinghamshire village which furnishes a more pleasing instance of the best type of English rural landscape than does Bramcote. It is in a measure remarkable that a village which is only five miles removed from the smoke and tall chimneys of a manufacturing town should be so favoured. Standing on a level and railed platform at the very top of Mr. Frederick Smith's house at Bramcote, on a day when the distant landscape is not obliterated by mist, you may see many miles of country. Lincoln Minster, Belvoir Castle, the wooded heights of Leicestershire, and the more barren hills of stony Derbyshire, come within the range of vision, and the view is full of charm and variety. Both Mr. Smith and Mrs. Sherwin Gregory, who owns the land about here, and whose

house is called Bramcote Hills, enjoy incomparable views. The hollows are studded with cottages here and there, and then there is the pretty village.

On one of these eminences which give to the village a type of picturesqueness which is rare in this part of Nottinghamshire, stands Mr. Smith's substantial mansion, and now that its owner has relinquished his connexion with the Legislature, and withdrawn to this extent at any rate from public life, you may fairly count upon finding him at home. Some of Mr. Smith's friends could never quite understand why he gave up his seat for North Nottinghamshire, after a connexion with that constituency extending over a period of a dozen years, and dating from a determined and successful battle against a nobleman whose family had long been connected with the county by territorial and official ties. Seeing this broad-shouldered English gentleman, in the very prime of life, in every way fitted for public service, no one would think that he had found considerations of health sufficient to induce him to give up a seat in Parliament, which any number of influential people would be glad enough to fill. That his motive was a good one cannot be doubted ; a shrewd, clear-headed, cultivated man, who has devoted twelve of the best years of his life to the business of Parliament, and who has long been an energetic partner in a great and prosperous banking concern, would not make a movement of the kind indicated to gratify any idle caprice.

Bramcote Hall is not now in the condition in which it was when by purchase it came into Mr. Frederick Smith's possession. Its size, in the first place, was hardly proportionate to the requirements of a county family ; its construction was quaint, not to say inconvenient. In the alterations that were made Mr. Smith carried out his own ideas, and by erecting a staircase here, a suite of apartments there and by other important alterations, all of them more or less ingenious, Bramcote Hall became the solid, comfortable country house of red brick that it is to-day. Mr. Smith is not a landowner, as I have already stated ; his Bramcote estate is represented by a small park, in which are groups of trees—oak, elm, Scotch fir, and English chestnut, and a few acres of grass land beyond. His house is not a museum of curiosities ; the pictures he possesses might almost be counted on one's fingers. The family portraits are, I believe, in the possession of Lord Carrington ; at any rate in the rooms of Bramcote Hall there are no canvasses that would afford the visitor any assistance in tracing the history of the family. But this comfortable country residence which presents all the outward signs of cultivated prosperity, and all the inward graces of English country life as it is enjoyed by families of position in the county, is not altogether destitute of examples of pictorial art. The few pictures that the rooms contain are not such as the art collector would pay fancy

prices for, but they are well selected and good of their class. In the drawing room, with its small conservatory opening out at one end, there are a couple of bright pictures by Unterberger, representing under the favourable conditions of bright Italian sunshine and azure sky, scenes that are familiar to those who have travelled in Italy and have wandered from the way that is usually pursued by tourists. Another picture which hangs over the mantel piece in the dining room was produced by the same painter, who has here perpetuated a pleasant memory of Sorrento in light and airy colours. In the same room there is a charming picture, by Jacobson—a rich orange sunset suffusing a Norwegian landscape. There is nothing remarkable about these pictures, but they reproduce beautiful scenes and they reflect, may be, in some measure the taste of their owner. A cabinet in the drawing room contains some fine specimens of china, which have been got together by Mr. Smith at different times and in different places. Here I learned something of the distinctive characteristics of those precious bits of ware. One soon gets to like old china; it improves on acquaintance. Under the guidance of a *connoisseur* quaintness becomes beauty, and primitiveness of form and design assumes an almost fascinating significance. Brought face to face with the barest rudiments of china lore, one recognises the artistic value of a Dresden drinking tankard, and becomes pleasantly reconciled to tea cups of Crown Derby, so unlike the crockery which graces modern tables. Here in this cabinet there are some interesting examples of Dresden, Derby, and Chelsea china in a variety of interesting forms, which have been collected with much patience and artistic taste, and at a great deal of expense. There is much to be learnt from an inspection of a fine collection of old china, and one gets the wholesome impression that those who are at so much pains and expense to obtain it, are not altogether influenced by a prevailing craze. At any rate Mr. Smith's collection of china, which has spread to other parts of this house, certainly deserves a place in any notice of Bramcote Hall. Some portion of it is preserved in an oak cabinet which originally formed part of an old place at Rempstone on the borders of this county, and now stands at the extremity of the entrance hall, at Bramcote.

BUNNY.

BUNNY Park Hall, a mansion of considerable importance, is owned and occupied by Miss Hawksley, niece of the late Mrs. Forteath, to whom the estate was bequeathed by Lord Raneliffe, the last of the barons of that title. The property originally belonged to the Parkyns, an old and distinguished family whose estates seem to have got into other hands, or to have been worn away by the friction of legal machinery. The baronetcy is still maintained, but the title does not carry any large rent roll. The family of which Sir Thomas Parkins, baronet, is the head, can claim long descent, and a distinguished and protracted connection with this county. Towards the latter end of the sixteenth century Richard Parkyns, Recorder of Nottingham and Leicester, who was by no means dependent upon the emoluments of his office, purchased the manor of Bunny, then as now of considerable extent. His descendant, Mr. Isham Parkyns, also of Bunny, held the rank of colonel during the Civil Wars, and in consideration of the determined and courageous resistance he offered to the power of the Usurper, which is said to have implied his own impoverishment, his son was created a baronet in the year 1681. In 1795, little more than a hundred years later, the family acquired a higher rank, and Thomas Boothby Parkyns was made Baron Raneliffe, an Irish peer. On the death of the second Lord Raneliffe, in 1850, who succeeded to the Bunny estates, the peerage became extinct. By marriage the family is connected with several distinguished and titled houses. Mr. Mansfield Parkyns, who formerly lived at Woodborough Hall, married a daughter of Lord Chancellor Westbury, and one of the daughters of the first baron was espoused to Sir Richard Levinge, an Irish baronet.

George Augustus Henry Anne Parkyns, second and last Baron Raneliffe, who died at Bunny Park, has not been dead long enough to be forgotten by Nottingham people. His political connection with the county town was as memorable as that of the late Sir Robert Clifton, and between the two there is something in common. For a long period Lord Raneliffe represented Nottingham in Parliament, and his popularity was as remarkable as it was long-lived. At the age of fifteen he was the bearer of a title and the possessor of very considerable property to which he subsequently contrived to add the ancient belongings of the Parkyns family. The newly fledged lordling was brought up into the immediate care of Lord

Moir, who considered that he could have had better training than that to be obtained in a fashionable regiment. On his marriage with the Earl of Granard's daughter, the young lord left the army and became equerry to the Prince of Wales, afterwards George the Fourth. As soon as he reached manhood's estate, Lord Rancliffe was returned to Parliament for Minehead, under the good old system of purchase which obtained them. Lord Rancliffe sat for this place for seven months, and it is said that his constituents never saw him or knew what he was like. In 1812 there was a vacancy in the representation of Nottingham on the resignation of Mr. D. P. Coke, and a number of persons interested in the election went to Bunny, and induced Lord Rancliffe to stand in the Whig interest. A sharp contest ensued, and Lord Rancliffe was returned, his success being largely due to the influence exercised upon the constituency by Lady Rancliffe. The other successful candidate was Mr. John Smith, who was returned at the head of the poll. In 1818 and again in 1826, Lord Rancliffe was returned for Nottingham, and he did not withdraw from Parliamentary life until four years later, after representing the borough for twenty-eight years. He died at Bunny, in 1850, at the age of sixty-five, and of him, one of the principal biographers says :—"Lord Rancliffe was what might be considered a good party man, but by no means a good political leader. He was neither fitted by natural endowments, nor yet by the habits he cultivated for the post of a leader ; still his views were sound and constitutional on most political subjects, and his votes, which were uniformly in accordance with his professions, were calculated to advance the cause of social progress and the diffusion of civil and religious liberty throughout the world."

There is very little at Bunny to remind one of Lord Rancliffe's connexion with the house. Either he or those who followed him evidently contemplated enlarging the place, and commenced the necessary alterations. But the plan was never carried out, and Bunny is an unfinished mansion at the present time. The introduction of a new staircase or flight of steps was contemplated, and amongst the litter of a partially finished apartment there are some of the pieces which were to form this new work, so long since abandoned. Not that Bunny Hall requires any enlargement. It is a large and spacious mansion with, on the ground floor, a continuous suite of rooms said to be among the biggest in the whole county. These, the drawing room, the library, and the dining room, are entered from a long corridor lighted from above, terminating in a billiard hall, and ornamented at intervals with glass cases containing birds. In one case is an albatross ; in another the graceful form and exquisite plumage of a flamingo. At the end of the suite of rooms is a small conservatory opening into the drawing room, which is furnished in sumptuous fashion. The walls are

decorated with graceful designs and in lively colours, and the furniture is bright and elegant. There are some rare old cabinets here, amongst them a Louis Quatorze and one of Florentine Mosaic, and some valuable pieces of china. The fireplace is the work of Italian artists. It is supported by slabs of marble of exquisite purity, bearing on either the perfectly sculptured form of some beauteous goddess. Both drawing and dining rooms are destitute of pictures; it was never intended that those walls, so expensively and artistically decorated, should be hidden by picture frames. In the dining room there is another fine cabinet and a number of quaint high-backed chairs, which are said to have been made and carved in the reign of Elizabeth. The windows overlook a square of cheerful gardens enclosed by a low and open wall. The library is between the drawing and dining rooms, and there are in it a great number of books. On one of the tables there is a small bust of the First Napoleon, engaged in sketching a plan of the battle of Marengo. A special value is attached to this ornament. The house contains a number of portraits, about which one is able to get but little information. They are all of them said to be members of the ancient family of Parkyns, and one which hangs over the antique mantelpiece in the billiard hall, a gentleman in armour, may, perhaps, be safely described as that of Mr. Isham Parkyns, who took such a prominent part in the Civil Wars. Possibly Vanderbank's portraits of Sir Thomas and Lady Parkyns are among the collection, part of which has been consigned to the housekeeper's room. The family, of which these portraits remind one, at one time had great influence in the county. They were settled in Berkshire before they came here, but they should certainly be classed among the old Nottinghamshire families. One of them, buried in the fine old church at Bunny, the Sir Thomas Parkyns of the last century, was an extraordinary man. He was a great wrestler, he studied physic for the benefit of his neighbours, and he wrote in dead and living languages. He distributed scraps of Latin over the parish with becoming impartiality, and tombstone and horse block were alike inscribed with the language of Maro and Flaccus. It was his mission to encourage the spread of muscular Christianity, and to give a classic turn to bucolic life. The whimsical epitaph on his monument is not inappropriate, applied, as it is, to a worshipper of muscle, who once said, "I receive no limberham, no darling sucking bottle who must not rise at Midsummer until eleven of the clock, till the fire has aired his room and clothes of his colliquative sweats, raised by high sauces and spicey forced meats, where the cook does the office of the stomach with the emetic tea table set out with bread and butter for 's breakfast; I'll scarce admit a sheepeater! none but beefeaters will go down with me." The Parkyns' were good friends to Bunny. When they lived at the hall they built and endowed

schools and almshouses in the parish, restored the church, and they are said to have dispensed charity and hospitality with a lavish hand. What is generally called a tower gives an imposing appearance to Bunny Hall. This is an elevated piece of brickwork, which in the distance looks like the tower of a church. It rises to a considerable height, and from its summit, which is reached by an oak staircase, you may see objects that are very far away. The brickwork is old and it is evident that the house is old too. On the front of the brickwork is a coat of arms, and the date recorded on the stonework is 1723. The lower part of the tower is ivy-grown, with here and there some odd sprays of ragwort.

CHILWELL.

CHILWELL Hall is too near the road to enjoy that seclusion which is regarded as one of the conditions of country life, and its elevation is perhaps lower than is absolutely desirable. But the traffic of the public highway which passes through the village, and beneath a wall which encloses the hall grounds, is neither frequent nor noisy; and if it were both, the principal building in the village would still enjoy comparative privacy. For the shrubs are so thick, the trees are so tall, and the situation of the house is so low that no part of the building is visible from the road, so that strangers to the place pass and re-pass without being conscious of its existence. But if the proportions of Chilwell Hall are not familiar to Nottinghamshire people, they are aware that there is such a house in the county, and they know something of the family residing there. How should it be otherwise, seeing that there has been a county house at Chilwell before the reign of the Sixth Henry, and that the Charltons have lived in it for more than two hundred and fifty years? It was once owned by the Martels, from whom it descended to the Babingtons—both families of estate and position, and according to worthy authority it passed by marriage to the Delves, of Doddington, in Cheshire, and from them to the Sheffields, Marquises of Normandy, and Dukes of Buckingham. The house has been altered and enlarged by successive owners. Sir William Babington, Lord Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, rebuilt it in the reign of Henry the Sixth. Subsequent alterations were in the Elizabethan style, and in 1652 further additions were made. From Lord Sheffield it was purchased by Mr. Christopher Pymme, and sold by one of that gentleman's sons to Mr. Thomas Charlton, of Sandiacre, in whose family it has remained to this day. Mr. Charlton at that time had a good house in the neighbouring county, and it was not until 1620 that his son Nicholas made a home of Chilwell. Before they came into Nottinghamshire, the Charltons were among the landed proprietors of Derbyshire, to which county one branch of the family belonged. They formerly, as already stated, had a house at Sandiacre, and estates in different parts of the county. The present head of this family is a landowner in Derbyshire, for which county he is a magistrate as well as for Nottinghamshire. About the reign of Edward VI. Thomas Charlton settled at Sandiacre, before the purchase of the Chilwell estate the family had property in the adjoining county. Investigation and research have

shown that the Charltons descended from a John de Charleton, who was M.P. for the City of London as early as 1318, and from that time until the Battle of Bosworth, when Sir Richard Charlton was slain, the family attainted, and their lands confiscated to the Crown, they were large proprietors. They were afterwards restored in blood but never in purse, and it was left for after generations to regain that territorial position which their remote ancestor had forfeited. When the family belonged to Middlesex they were represented in successive Parliaments, and one of them, Sir Thomas Charlton, was Speaker of the House of Commons in 1453. Edward Charlton, who died in 1658, was a commissioner under the Parliament for raising troops at the civil wars, and the present head of the family, Mr. Thomas Broughton Charlton, once faced a very trying contest in order to gain a seat in the Senate. This was on the occasion of the general election of 1841, when Mr. Charlton was a candidate for the borough of Nottingham in the Conservative interest, in conjunction with the late Mr. John Walter. The Liberal candidates were Mr. George Larpent and Sir. John Cam Hobhouse, and the contest was attended with riot and disorder. The tumult which had taken place in the earlier part of the year at the bye-election that followed the decease of Sir R. Ferguson, was repeated in the summer, and both on the nomination and polling days the town was a scene of uproar and confusion. Broken heads and injured limbs were not uncommon, and the mob conducted itself as only a Nottingham mob can do when its worst passions are aroused. At the poll Mr. Charlton and his colleague were unsuccessful, the Liberals being returned by a considerable majority. Mr. Charlton never again sought Parliamentary honours, but Mr. John Walter, a year later, when Mr. Larpent accepted the Chiltern Hundred, defeated Mr. Sturge, the Liberal candidate, by 84 votes.

The house at Chilwell, which for so long a period has been owned by the Charltons, forms part of a village whose rusticity has not yet been destroyed by such building operations as those which have gone on in the heart and outskirts of its neighbour Beeston, once extensively owned by the Charlton family. It has retained its village aspect and its village life, and some of its inhabitants have a distinct belief, which sometimes finds expression, that a house standing out in the fields is tenanted by a ghost, which, however, never found its way into their last census papers, and is, therefore, not accounted for. This is the restless spirit of a man who was mysteriously murdered in the locality within the memory of many living, and whose body was never discovered. Persons who have tenanted this house in the fields, have spoken of noises in the night and phantom-play of that kind, but none has ever seen anything approaching the popular notion of what a ghost is like, so that people who hear about the spectre are reasonably sceptical. Between the

Chilwell ghost and Chilwell Hall there is nothing in common, except perhaps something which comes of the fact that the principal family in the village is kept *au courant* concerning the proceedings of the spirit who might perhaps find that appropriate calm, which would confine him to his own resources when he felt the need of diversion, that now assumes the form of pranks with shutters or windows, if he could be induced to take up his abode in the dark and ancient cellars of the hall. In these cool depths where the wine is kept, there is some old stonework forming walls of tremendous thickness, which in all probability formed part of the original mansion built centuries ago, long before a Charlton ever dreamt of coming to Chilwell. From the cellars to the drawing room is a pleasant transition, for it is a passing from darkness to light. And in the principal room at Chilwell there are pictures and old china and pottery ware, some of it quaint, and showing figures roughly drawn, whilst other pieces are ornamented with designs of great delicacy and exquisite purity of colour. On the wall space between the windows are two paintings by Gaspard Poussin, landscapes which are full of beauty. One of them, perhaps the best, is an Italian scene, with figures in the foreground, and a lake, upon whose surface a stately castle, high up among the trees, casts shadows. On the opposite side of the room are five water colours of considerable merit, but somewhat faded now, of scenery at Bearwood, in Berkshire, the home of Mr. John Walter. In one there is a patch of the lovely purple heather of old Windsor Forest; in another water, and in all of them there is the brightness and the quiet beauty of the scenery of open England. Mrs. Charlton, it may here be mentioned, is sister to the owner of Bearwood, and to Mr. Henry Walter, of Papplewick Hall. The two large pictures at the end of the hall, are very fine copies of the Sibils of Persia and Cumæ, the latter of whom is fabled to have been consulted by Æneas, when that hero was in difficulties, and is known to have formed the subject of a picture by Dominichino. Between them is an exceedingly pleasing painting, by Montagu, of a portion of a Dutch town, and on the carpet underneath are two handsome inlaid chairs of Florentine origin. A very high panelling of dark coloured oak, which completely surrounds the dining room, except where the window recesses are, subdues the light which is admitted into this apartment. The woodwork here, which has a somewhat peculiar effect, originally belonged to the prebendal Rectory Hall, at Sandiacre, which was demolished in 1864. This panelling was then transferred to Mr. Charlton's house at Chilwell, and put to the use just mentioned. Where it ends, just below the ceiling, a number of china plates of considerable beauty have been arranged in regular order, and these serve to give some ornamentation to the room. In 1592 Thomas Charlton, who succeeded his father in 1578, became the lessee of the

rectory at Sandiacre, under a prebendal lease from the Dean and Chapter of Lichfield, and it remained in the possession of the family until the death of Nicholas Charlton in 1704. In the dining room, a table, which was fashioned by furniture makers who lived in the Jacobean period, and which is capable of considerable expansion, serves the purpose of a sideboard. This piece of furniture, which has been in the house for centuries, is interesting no less for its antiquity than for the quaintness of its design. The greatest curiosity in the house is an old iron chest of cylindrical shape. To make it stronger and more secure it is bound at intervals with iron hoops, securely rivetted, and furnished with a lock, the works of which are curiously and ingeniously complicated. The key which opens this remarkable specimen of the locksmith's art is many-warded and of singular shape, and without its aid it would require something more than the skill of the modern burglar to open the chest. This curious receptacle, which now stands in the hall, was unearthed some time back, and in it were found a large number of parchment deeds, most of them being dated at the beginning of the seventeenth century, and relating to a portion of the family property; and a number of old Bibles, which the owner was anxious to preserve from the sacriligious touch of those into whose hands he feared they might fall. It is supposed—and the supposition is perfectly reasonable, that the chest was made to be placed in the earth, and to secure valuables in times when the country was agitated by civil strife, from which it is well known these parts were not exempt. The Bibles and the deeds found in the chest were carefully preserved; the documents remain there still, and the books have been transferred to the shelves of the library, where is carefully preserved the original letter, written to Mr. Thomas Charlton by Major-General Ireton of the Commonwealth army, a distinguished Republican, who took an active part in the contest between Charles the First and the Parliament. This remarkable man, who had very great influence in the councils of the Protector, was the son of a Derbyshire gentleman. The superscription is "to my honored friend, Mr. Thomas Charleton, at his father's house, in Chilwell, near Nottingham." and it is dated "Colchester League, August 14th, 1648." The handwriting is still easily decipherable, and the letter is as follows:—

"Sr,

I have sealed and deliver^d the Conveyance of Carver's flatte unto you, & a letter of Attorney for makeinge lyvery of seisin; There is noe alteration from the draughts wch yr brother brought me, save in the time limited for deliveringe up to you all writeings concerninge that lande, wch is altered from Michaelmas next unto Lady Day followeinge Michaelmas, through the delay of sealeinge, beeing soe neare, & my employmt soe farre of & the

presnt troubles such, as I could not have pformed covenante wth you in that poynte, if it had beene limitted to that time, all though the mayne & most materiall of the writeings I delivered to yr ffather at Addenborow last springe, wch I prsume you have allready. I desire you to paye the wholle price to my mother Ireton, & her Receipt for it shall bee yr sufficient discharge, but at any time afterwarde I shall be ready (upon yr deliveringe in of that) to give you an Acquittance for the monye under my owne hand & seale. The deeds now sealed are committed into yr brother Mr. Nich: Charleton, his hande, in truste betwixt us, untill hee shall deliver to mee a Receipt or letter from my mother Acknowledgeinge the Receipt of the monye & a counterpte of the Conveyance to bee sealed by you ; wch I desire you hasten, & lett the counterpte bee deliverd allsoe to my mother, whose acknowledgemt of the Receipt of it shall serve wth out yr trouble of sendinge it to mee. An hundred pounce of the monye I intend for the discharge of soe much due from mee to yr uncle, Mr. Edw: Charleton upon bonde ; if you bringe & deliver in that bonde to my mother wth the Rest of the price, shee may give you a Receipt for the wholle price ; I know not certaynly what Interest may in strictnesse bee due to yr uncle, but my mother doth ; I hope hee will upon the payeinge in of the principall, consider the troubles & difficultyes of the times since I had it & not exacte full Interest upon the Acct. for the wholle time, but make a conscionable abatemt & Acct. what the full Interest (for the years hee hath Receivd it) does exceed the yearly Rate hee thinks reasonable to take for the wholle time in satisfaction for the time in arrears, wherein I pray you (wth my service) presnt my desires to him.—I remayne, yr assured ffriend and servt.,

H. IRETON.

Colr. League, Aug. 14th, 1648.

The interest of uncle's £100, from the time you entered upon the lande, I prsume you will be soe reasonable as to discharge, over and above the price ; at least consideringe, that very soone after the bargayne, I desired ffather, or self, to pay £100 of the price unto him, and take in the bond into your hande, until I should seal the writings ; wherein I assure you there hath been noe witting delaye on my parte. My humble service to ffather, mother, lady and ffriends with you, I pray you presnt."

In the hall are some good cases of birds, one of which contains a very fine specimen of the kite—*milvus vulgaris*, a bird of prey which is rarely seen in the Midlands. This one was killed in the parish by one of the keepers between thirty and forty years ago. What family portraits Mr. Charlton has are hung in the hall, and there is one of Mr. William Charlton, his ancestor, who was High

Sheriff of the county in 1824. The grounds outside the house, if they are not extensive, are picturesque and pleasing, and the fatal frosts of the past few winters, destructive as they have been, have left some noble trees on the estate. In front of the east side of the house, its fan leaves almost brushing the walls and windows, is a mighty horse chestnut, whose branches sweep to the ground in graceful curves and tower up aloft to a proud elevation. This is said to be the largest tree of the kind in the county, and it is certainly the dominating glory of the Chilwell pleasure grounds.

CLIFTON.

OLD houses get into the possession of new families, who, by a convenient change of surname, obtain a fresh identity, and acquire in the County of their recent adoption, a position of territorial consequence. Very often it is an ordinary process of inheritance which brings new families into old houses ; sometimes it is success in trade. It is with some little astonishment, and perhaps a little envy, that we learn that Mr. So-and-So, in the midst of a successful business career, has taken such-and-such a hall, which for generations has been occupied by a county family, and identified with a county name—a house which has perhaps always taken a leading part in the affairs of the shire. It is with considerably less astonishment that we learn that an old estate has passed into the hands of a nephew or second cousin of the late owner, because that is a perfectly natural and regular change, and in the perpetuation of the family name, the anomaly, if there is one, is soon lost sight of. For centuries Clifton Hall has been occupied by a Clifton, and the family has been located in this county longer, perhaps, than any other that I could name. The Cliftons of Clifton have been men of title and consequence, their position and standing being derivable not alone from their landed possessions, but because of the part their family has played in the affairs of the nation, both civil and military. The surname of the Cliftons is derived from a village made up of a few thatched cottages, some of which have of late years acquired a tiled and conventional dignity, whilst others still retain their primitiveness, and the manor has been held by the family ever since Sir Gervase de Clifton purchased it of a certain De Rhodes, about the latter end of the reign of Henry the Third. This Sir Gervase was Sheriff of Nottingham as far back in forgotten centuries as 1279, and he was afterwards Sheriff of York, the lustre attaching to these honourable offices being somewhat dimmed by his committal to gaol for having made a false return of a writ. Both Sir Gervase de Clifton and Sir John de Clifton, who came afterwards, married into titled families, the former taking as his wife a daughter of Sir William Sampson, of Epperstone, and the latter a daughter of Sir John Cressy, of Hodsock, both extinct county families. The last-named lady brought considerable property to the already large estates of the Cliftons. Her husband represented Nottingham in Parliament, and was one of the twelve gentlemen who received the spurs of

knighthood on the morning of the Battle of Shrewsbury, where he was slain, together with Sir Nicholas Burden, of Maplebeck, Sir Hugh Shirely, of Radcliffe-on-Soar, and several other Nottinghamshire gentlemen. Then follows a long line of Cliftons, many of whom held important offices and rendered service to their country. There was Sir Gervase Clifton, of Clifton and Hodsock, who was Sheriff of Nottingham and Derby from 1471 to 1477, Receiver-General in those two counties, and Esquire to the body of Edward the Fourth. This gentleman played a prominent part in the disputes between the Yorkists and Lancastrians, and was engaged in the Battle of Tewkesbury. He was thought much of by the Lancastrian party, of whom the Duke of Somerset was the leader, on account of his firm devotion to their cause. This Sir Gervase married a lady of Kent, and was several times Sheriff of that County, and also Lieutenant of Dover Castle, under the Duke of Gloucester. For his faithful services Henry the Sixth conferred upon him the office of Treasurer of Calais and surrounding districts, and on the death of the then Archbishop of Canterbury the temporalities of that See were committed into his hands. He was also governor of several places in France. Ten years later the dispute between the two Houses of York and Lancaster is still rife, and we find the next head of the Cliftons, also a Sir Gervase, contrary to the principles of his family, allying himself with the Yorkists. This Sir Gervase was killed at Bosworth Field, the last of the thirteen contests between the Houses of York and Lancaster, which had extended over a period of more than forty years, filling the country with civil disturbance, and deluging its plains with blood. A circumstance is related in connection with the part Clifton took in the fray, which is at once interesting and affecting. He left his country seat in Nottinghamshire in company with Sir John Byron, a strenuous supporter of the Lancastrians, and they bound themselves by an oath that whichever of the two should survive the battle, should do his best to save the lands of the slain one from confiscation. Sir Gervase Clifton was mortally wounded, and Byron only arrived to hear his expiring words, "All is over ; remember the oath between us !" Sir John Byron was no doubt true to his pledge. At any rate the history of Clifton contains no record of confiscation, and the house continued to furnish illustrious heads. A gentleman of considerable authority, both in peace and war, in four successive reigns, was the Sir Gervase Clifton, who is mentioned in a distich penned by Elizabeth,

"Gervase the gentle, Stanhope the stout,
Markham the lion, and Sutton the lout."

The other three names are those of Nottinghamshire gentlemen. The son of this distinguished soldier and courtier, who in times of peace was noted for the gentleness of his disposition, and the

kindness of his heart, in turn left a son who died at the early age of twenty years, leaving behind him a son, Sir Gervase, who is said to have been even more gentle than his grandfather, and who has been described as "the most noted person of his time for courtesy." This Sir Gervase had a most conspicuous capacity for matrimony. He was married no fewer than seven times, and the names of these—most of them ladies of title—are recorded upon the canvas which hangs over the mantelpiece in the dining room at Clifton Hall, and upon which the strongly marked features of this remarkable personage appear. The first was the beautiful Penelope, daughter of Robert Earl of Warwick, and Penelope his wife. She was mother of the wretched, unfortunate Sir Gervase, his father's greatest foil ; she died October 26th, 1613, aged twenty-three years. The second was Frances, daughter of Francis Earl of Cumberland, and Grisilda, his countess. She brought him—1. Margaret, who was first married to Sir John South, secondly to — Whitcote, Esq., and lastly to Sir Robert Carey ; 2. Frances, first wife of Richard Temple, Esq., afterwards married to Anthony Eyre, Esq. ; 3. Anne, married to Sir Francis Rhodes ; 4. Sir Clifford ; and 5. Letice, wife of Clifton Rhodes. This second wife of Sir Gervase died November 22nd, 1627, aged thirty-three years. The third was Mary, daughter of Sir John Egiok, of Egiok, in Worcestershire, and Anne, his wife ; she was widow of Sir Francis Leke, of Sutton, in the county of Derby, and died January 19th, 1630. The fourth wife was Isabel, daughter of — Meek, Esq., and relict of John Hodges, alderman of London ; she died in July, 1637. The fifth was Anne, daughter of Sir Francis South, knight, of the county of Lincoln ; she was buried at Clifton, June 1st, 1639. The sixth was Jane, daughter of Anthony Eyre, Esq., of Rampton, in the county of Nottingham ; she died in London, and was buried at Clifton, March 17th, 1655. The seventh and last wife was Alice, daughter of Henry, Earl of Huntington ; she died after her husband, in the same year, 1666, at London, and was buried in St. Giles' Church, as was also the third lady. But though matrimony went so largely to make up his celebrity, Sir Gervase did not allow his uxorious proclivities to interfere with the due discharge of important official duties, for he represented Nottinghamshire in Parliament in the reigns of James the First, Charles the First, and Charles the Second, and was Commissioner to the King during the Civil Wars. Thoroton says he most generously, hospitably, and charitably served all, from the King to the poorest beggar, that he was four score years Lord of Clifton, of a sound body, and a cheerful, facetious spirit. For his loyalty and fidelity, and for his general services to the State, James the First rewarded him with a baronetcy, one of the first of the order. He died in 1666, and was buried at Clifton. The succeeding generations of Cliftons were more or less mixed up

with public life, and the representatives of this ancient family continued to occupy a leading position in the county. There was a Sir Gervase Clifton, who for some time represented East Retford in Parliament, and married a daughter of the Earl of Bellamont, and after him in 1767 the then Lord of Clifton was High Sheriff of Nottinghamshire. Little less than a century afterwards the last baronet was returned to Parliament by the electors of Nottingham, and enjoyed a popularity as remarkable as it was enduring. The late Sir Robert Clifton was three times elected Member of Parliament for Nottingham, and was an immense favourite with a large portion of the constituency. If the most ardent admirer of the late baronet was asked what were the special qualities which won this ever faithful support, he would probably be at a loss for an answer. The family name may have secured some of it; a certain open-heartedness and unfailing geniality on the part of the popular favourite, may have had something to do with his success, though these suggestions are, of course, of a distinctly speculative order. The fact remains that the late Sir Robert Clifton possessed the sublime secret of winning popular applause without any effort of his own. It came to him whether he would or no, and from his first connection with the borough in 1861, when he defeated the representative of a house almost as old as his own, and having a far greater stake in the county, down to the time of his death in 1869, he was the idol of a vast section of political Nottingham. But his charm died with him, and those who have sought to revive it have signally failed. In 1869 Cliftonism became extinct, and this venerable family died out. Upon the death of Sir Robert Clifton the baronetcy became dormant, and the estates of the Cliftons, together with their ancient house, passed to Mr. Henry Robert Markham, who is now lord of the manor, and was High Sheriff of this county in 1875. On coming to the estates Mr. Markham changed his name to Clifton, so that the family name, associated in times past with events which form part of the history of the country, is still perpetuated, and the river still flows beneath the home of the Cliftons, of Clifton.

I suppose almost every inhabitant of Nottingham knows Clifton Grove about as well as he knows his own garden, if he has one; not a few are familiar with the handsome proportions of Clifton Hall, which is a conspicuous object from the railway, and from many other points on the Nottingham side of the Trent. In the late Sir Robert Clifton's time there were many in this town who had opportunities of making themselves acquainted with the interior of this large and handsome house, for the popular baronet dispensed hospitality with a liberal hand. Many people passed those outer portals, where the demi-peacocks, expanded and counter charged, which represent the Clifton crest, keep perpetual watch, and found a cordial welcome awaiting them. The famous Grove is not much

changed, though, perhaps, it grows more leafy every year. The awful tradition of outrage and murder attaching to a particular part of the overhanging cliffs still clings to it, and even the veneration in which it is said to have been held by lovers in times gone by, is maintained by the sweethearts of a modern and prosaic epoch.

The exterior of the house bears evidence of antiquity. The bricks have acquired that soft tone which the long continued influence of the elements produces, and the stone work, chiefly represented by the ten Doric columns that support the principal front of the house are mellowed with age. There are no traces of recent alteration observable, and it is probable that the house in its present condition is much what it was in Sir Robert's time. Most of the furniture is new; that the visitor can easily see. There still remain, however, distributed over various parts of the house, handsome pieces of antique furniture which serve to remind one of the past history of the place. In the Library, for instance, there are some rare oak bookcases, filled apparently with the literature of the last century, and four oak doors leading into other apartments. One of these doors leads into what is known as the Chinese drawing room—a name derived from the "Celestial" character of its furniture and decorations. The house contains many interesting rooms. There is the "red room," a small sitting room where the furniture is blue and the walls red, a combination which produces a somewhat peculiar effect. Here are several family portraits, including that of a certain Thomas, Lord Wentworth, painted sometime about the middle of the seventeenth century, and the Lady Clifton of a time long past, who, if the artist is faithful, narrowly escaped being a very beautiful woman. In various parts of the house there are portraits of the Cliftons in the uniforms and costumes of ancient times, including that of the very much married Sir Gervase, which occupies a panel over the antique marble mantelpiece in the drawing room. There are several Ladies Clifton—very beautiful some of them must have been—and a number of male members of the family, whose identity it is difficult to fix when there is no one at hand who knows anything at all about them. There is, however, no mistaking that big painting in the entrance hall, which takes up a vast extent of wall. The small, and by no means unhandsome features; the jetty moustache and head-covering, the cigar end smouldering on the ground, are there faithfully and happily placed upon canvas. Sir Robert Clifton, bestriding a favourite gray, is there to the life, more genial, more understandable, and certainly more conspicuous than any of those grim-looking ancestors of his who lived in times with which we have very little in common. There are other large portraits in this ancient hall, in whose corners long javelins are reared, and upon whose cold floor the fire casts a cheerful glow. Upstairs there is a State bed room, with yellow and satin bed furniture, which it is said once witnessed the slumbers of Royalty;

a marble hall floored with squares of black and white marble, and looking like a big chess board, the walls occupied by a series of small panel pictures, said to be intended to represent the faithful retainers of one of the warrior Cliftons; a bright and handsome sitting room used by the lady of the house, and a large drawing room luxuriously furnished. The walls of this room contain some very valuable pictures which, I suppose, have been in the house for a very considerable period. There are some gems amongst these—sea pieces by Vandervelde, and portraits by artists of the highest repute, Raphael, Titian, Stoddart, and others being represented on these walls.

The grounds at Clifton Hall are among the finest in the county. The house stands high on a solid rock of gypsum, and behind it are swells of smooth turf; green terraces rising one above the other are shaded by yews which grow in rows, their dark and sombre foliage contrasting with the livelier green beneath, and beyond the gardens are the woods. From the house, from the pleasure gardens, and from the woods the loveliest views are obtainable. At the end of a grassy walk in the woods near the Hall, there is a kind of large summer house. It is a single room reached by stone steps, and at one time was rather richly decorated, but it is disused now; the windows are broken and there is a wide gap in the ceiling. This is the highest part of the ground, and looking through these broken windows on a clear day at a season when the country is full of young life, you get view, cheerful, diversified, and full of interest. On a dull day in early Winter there is something weird in the outlook. Immediately below there is a deep, still pool fringed with dead rushes and drooping shrivelled grasses, a thin mist clinging to the surface of the water. Between this and the Trent there is a kind of swamp which has recently been flooded, and through leafless pollard willows and dead osier sticks you can see the onward motion of the grand old river which was navigable before the Conquest. The mysterious pool, the dead rushes, the leafless swamp, and the dark river make up a dreary bit of still life on a dull November day.

CLUMBER.

IN 1879, Clumber House was partially destroyed by an accidental fire, and pictures and other things of immense value, which can never be replaced, perished in the flames. This fire happened just fifty years after the destruction of Nottingham Castle in the Reform Riots. Both the Castle and Clumber belong to the Duke of Newcastle, so that the family has suffered considerably by disasters of the burning order. But their rent roll is vast, and if the Dukes of Newcastle cannot buy pictures like those which were destroyed in the last fire, they have been enabled to rebuild their house on a sufficiently magnificent scale, and at a very considerable cost to repair the damage that had been done to brickwork and masonry and to internal decorations. Perhaps no home of title in the whole county is so well known as Clumber. Its owners have been men of high rank, great wealth, and mostly of power in the State, and they have allowed the public to visit their house at certain times of the year, and to see the treasures it contains—a house which for size and situation can hold its own with any of those other palaces that are occupied by the wealthy of this land, and treasures the like of which the riches of England would not purchase. The Dukes of Newcastle have been patrons of art and collectors of the best work of painters, ancient and modern, and the Clumber collection is celebrated in the art world and in the country. Visitors to the Castle Museum at Nottingham have had the privilege of seeing some of the choicest of the Clumber treasures, and it would have been a fortunate thing for the noble owner and his successors and for the country at large if the whole of the collection had been stored in those galleries when the late disastrous fire broke out.

The mansion, which stands on what was once a waste of forest land, was built in 1770 of white freestone, which was brought from a quarry on the Duke's estate five miles away. At that time it was said that no nobleman in England possessed such a princely abode. Its situation was unique; the lake facing its central front added a decided charm to its outward appearance, and its architectural advantages and great size gave it claims to be classed in the first rank of the stately homes of England. The house originally consisted of three fronts, the centre one facing the water, containing a light Ionic collonade; and looking at the building from the elegant bridge which crosses the lake, its appearance was most pleasing.

The lawns then, as now, were very fine, smooth, velvety, and of the richest colour, descending by terraces to the lake and fringed with thriving shrubberies. The park compasses eleven miles, and was once part of a forest which had hardly been explored. It is now surrounded by venerable woods, which are seldom trodden, except by deer and small wild animals. From the windows of the house you can see these noble woods, with their acres of sturdy vegetation ; but the attention is necessarily taken up with the beautiful and costly things arranged in the various rooms through which one is shown. A day could well be spent in studying the Clumber china ; it would take a longer time to do justice to all the pictures. The art treasures of Clumber enjoy a celebrity which has reached far and wide.

The collection of family portraits contains a long line of nobles, some of whom have been illustrious in the service of the State, whilst others have held local appointments, to the discharge of the duties in connection with which they have brought the intelligence, and the highmindedness that distinguished their race. At various times the collection has been enriched by the addition of works of art acquired by purchase or brought into the family by marriage. To name them would involve the publication of a list of almost all the great painters whose canvasses are famous in the galleries of the nations. There are examples by Rubens, Gainsborough, Hogarth, Reynolds, Snyders, Vandyke, Lely, Gerard Douw, Guido, Poussin, Claud Lorraine, Rembrandt, Ruysdaal, Salvator Rosa, del Sarto, Titian, Holbein, Creswick, Jansen, Teniers, Kneller, Dominichino, and a host of others. Some of these pictures, and not the least valuable of them, perished in the catastrophe of 1879. It is not often that such celebrities as these can be got together under one roof. Sigismunda weeping over the heart of Tancred, a picture which in the Clumber catalogue is attributed to Corregio, and was once the property of Sir Luke Schaub, is said by some to have been the work of Furino. It was this subject that Hogarth is said to have chosen for the purpose of showing that the praise bestowed upon the ancients was the result of prejudice, and his effort thus to compete with the dead was coarsely criticised by Horace Walpole, who likened his Sigismunda to a common courtesan, "with eyes red with rage and usquebaugh, tearing off the ornaments her keeper had given her." Guido's Artemisia, with the cup containing the ashes of her husband, has generally been regarded as a companion to the Sigismunda in the Clumber collection, in which the touches of Michel Angelo's genius are not wanting. The house is large enough to hold all these valuable paintings, and they are distributed over rooms which have long been famous for their size and beauty. The State dining room, sixty feet in length, and thirty-four in breadth, and designed to accommodate one hundred and fifty guests at table has been described as one of the glories of Clumber, with its rich

ornamentation and ornate fittings. On these walls were placed the four Market pieces by Snyders, the two landscapes by Zuccarelli, and the large painting of dead game by Wenix. The library was admired by everyone who visited Clumber under the old *regime*, on account of the light and elegant gallery round the upper part of the room, and the highly decorated ceiling. Here Westmercott's superb statue of Euphrosyne found a home, as also did Bailey's Thetis and Achilles, and many valuable bronzes, besides an extensive collection of rare old books, to say nothing of modern literature. Among the Clumber statuary the most celebrated pieces, besides those already mentioned, are a large figure of Napoleon, which some say is the work of Canova, whilst others set it down to Franzoni, purchased at Cararra in 1823; Bailey's statue of Thompson and busts of the Duke of Newcastle by Nollekens; Sir Robert Peel, Cromwell, and others.

Among the pleasure-houses of England very few can rival Clumber in pictorial and sculptural wealth, and like those other houses in the Dukeries it deserves to be ranked amongst the greatest houses of the country. The house was built in 1770, but successive owners have altered it. It stands, as I have already said, upon what, at the time the plans for its erection were being designed, was a dense forest covered with great trees and sturdy growths of bracken and heather. At enormous expense the then Duke of Newcastle reclaimed the land, and formed a lake, a small undertaking which cost him £7,000. In the re-building the aspect of the house has necessarily been somewhat altered, but it has not changed so as to subordinate the west front, which is still the most imposing part of the building. In the gardens flowers blossom in geometric beds; there are still graceful statues in the grounds, and from the terraces and from some of the principal rooms you look over this lake of some ninety acres, where the water-fowl find a home, and where the pike fatten which afford sport for the young Duke.

The head of the Pelham-Clintons, and the owner of their vast estates, which have been somewhat impoverished during the last generation, is a young nobleman, who was born no longer ago than 1864. His father died in the prime of life, and left the Earl of Lincoln, who was then a public schoolboy, the possessor of a great name and an estate, which in Nottinghamshire covers 34,500 acres of land. In 1641 the annual value of the Newcastle estates was, Nottinghamshire £6,229, Lincolnshire £100, Derbyshire £6,128, Staffordshire £2,349, Gloucestershire £1,681, Somersetshire £1,303, Yorkshire £1,700, Northumberland £3,000; total £22,390. The rent roll now is considerably more than that sum, and in time it may reasonably be expected that it will be still further increased. For the origin of the family name—Pelham-Clinton—we have to go

to the reign of Edward the First, during whose sovereignty the lordship of Pelham belonged to a certain Walter de Pelham, who died in 1292. In the reign of the third Edward, John de Pelham was a famous person, whose figure in memory of his valiant acts was painted on glass in the Chapterhouse of Canterbury Cathedral, of which he is said to have been a considerable benefactor. He was one of those who took the French King prisoner at the Battle of Poitiers. The son of this celebrity was scarcely less distinguished than the father, and amongst the offices he held were those of treasurer to the King and ambassador to the King of the French. Many of the Pelhams of succeeding generations were famous, and held high places, and the family was ennobled in 1706. The second Lord Pelham, by the will of his uncle, John Holles, Duke of Newcastle, was made his heir, and was afterwards created Duke of Newcastle and a Knight of the Garter. His brother dying without surviving male issue, the estates passed to Henry Clinton, Earl of Lincoln, who assumed the additional name of Pelham, his mother and his wife being both of that name. The Clintons had been settled in England since the Conquest, and took their name from a place in Oxfordshire. One of them was Bishop of Salisbury as early as 1228, and another was summoned to Parliament, under the title of Baron Clinton, in the reign of Edward the First. The second son of this noble was Lord High Admiral of England in 1333, and an earldom was conferred upon him—that of Huntingdon. His successors distinguished themselves in the wars of three reigns, and in 1572 the Clintons became Earls of Lincoln. The second of these earls was one of the commissioners at the trial of Mary Queen of Scots, the seventh was Constable of the Tower and Paymaster of the Forces in the reign of Queen Anne, and the ninth became Duke of Newcastle.

Of the Dukes of Newcastle the most distinguished were the first and the fifth. William Cavendish, first Duke of Newcastle, succeeded to the estates of his father in 1617. Three years later he was raised to the peerage as Baron Ogle and Viscount Mansfield, and in 1627 he became Earl of Newcastle. He is said to have been a man of retiring disposition, but of considerable attainments, and the King had such a high opinion of his character and his worth that he placed his son under his especial and immediate care. At that time the Cavendishes, of which family the first Duke of Newcastle was the head, resided at Welbeck and Bolsover Castle, and more than once these places were visited by the Sovereign, who was entertained with becoming splendour—entertainment which cost the Earl between £14,000 and £15,000. The popularity of the Earl was unbounded, and at one time or another he raised as many as 80,000 men to fight in the service of the King. But the storms of martial warfare and the worry of political conflict were little suited to the tastes of this

nobleman, who infinitely preferred the arts of peace. He was a ripe scholar, was very fond of the fine arts, and was, according to Clarendon, a very fine gentleman. Hume describes him as an ornament of the Court, and of his order, and says he took up cudgels on behalf of the misguided Charles merely from a high sense of honour and a personal regard to his master. He paid dearly for his elevation to the dignity of a dukedom. When he returned to his estate, after the wars were over, he found that his parks, with the exception of Welbeck, had been destroyed and plundered of their game, and his losses have been estimated at no less than £700,000. But fortune favoured his successors, and the possessions of the family have been augmented in a variety of ways. The Park property, then a part of Sherwood Forest, was bought of the Earl of Rutland. The fifth Duke of Newcastle was a most distinguished man, and when he was in office many important documents were dated from Clumber. He was successively Lord Warden of the Stannaries, Chief Secretary for Ireland, Secretary of State for the Colonies, and Secretary of State for War. Of him the late Miss Martineau, writing his memoir in 1864, states "No statesman of our time has won a more universal respect and regard, and few Ministers of any period could be more missed and mourned than he will be by good citizens of all parties and ways of thinking * * * Those who were nearest to him were subject to frequent surprises from his simplicity, his unconcealable, conscientious, and abiding sense of fellowship with all sincere people, whoever they may be. As a nobleman of aristocratic England, he was in this way a great blessing, and a singularly useful example."

COLSTON BASSETT.

THE manor of Colston Bassett, which is situated in the Southern Division of this county, has been in the possession of several different families. It is perhaps absolutely certain that no family ever held it so long as the Bassetts, who were its lords more than seven hundred years ago, and who had property in the county for generations afterwards. When Stephen was King, Ralph Bassett, after whom this place is named, filled the highest judicial office in the State, and his career furnishes an instance of judicial severity which has probably no parallel in the records of judges' sentences. At an Assize held in Leicestershire he is said to have convicted capitally fourscore criminals, and to have condemned six others to undergo the most horrible forms of torture. Perhaps it was in atonement for this extraordinary severity that, later in his life, he gave a strip of land and ten fat oxen for the maintenance of a Monk in an Abbey situated in another part of England. But this attempt to gain a reputation for piety and benevolence did not secure Judge Bassett against the influence of public opinion, and it was darkly asserted that this exalted official had condemned people to death and torture in order that he might enrich himself by their forfeitures. Ralph Bassett's son was also a judge, but his legal career, so far as I know, furnishes no extraordinary incident. For generations the Bassetts' held Colston, and it is said that one of them was successful in procuring a grant from Edward the First establishing a market and fair in the village. During the sovereignty of Richard the Second Colston Bassett passed into the hands of the Dukes of Buckingham, and by them it was held until the reign of Henry the Eighth, when it was again sold. The Hon. Mrs. Kay, sister to Lord Strafford, was in possession of the estate at the end of last century, and dying abroad left it by will to the late Mr. Henry Martin, M.P. for Kinsale, and afterwards Master in Chancery. He died in 1839, and was succeeded by his second son, Mr. H. B. Martin, who sold the estate in 1864 to Mr. G. B. Davy, of the firm of Anthony Gibbs and Co., the eminent London merchants. This gentleman died in 1874, and his son, Mr. G. B. Davy, disposed of the greater part of the estate to Mr. Robert Millington Knowles, a gentleman belonging to a Lancashire family, who now resides at the Hall.

The late Mr. Davy was a great gardener. He built a small village of glass houses, and he spent vast sums of money in perfecting orchids, a floral luxury for which his gardens were famous. He built

a house for his head gardener which in a town would be considered large enough to accommodate a tolerably influential family, and he employed some twenty men to attend to the work of his conservatories and pleasure grounds. Mr. Davy also took a great interest in cricket, and he had made, close to his house, a very fine cricket ground, a task which, looking at the somewhat uneven formation of the park and grounds and the character of the land, must have involved a very large expenditure of money. The stove-houses were certainly among the finest in the county, and the rare and beautiful things which they grew were famed beyond the limits of this shire. Mr. Knowles, although his tastes and aspirations do not run in the direction of orchids, keeps this part of the garden in excellent order. You may see in the houses that once were consecrated to the growth of the pampered children of horticulture, a collection of fine showy plants, and ferns, and hothouse products, sufficiently rare to show that scientific gardening is not neglected, and certainly sufficiently beautiful to indicate the existence of excellent taste on the part of those to whom they belong. Then there are great glass houses where grapes are grown, and where delicious fruits are brought to perfection, as was the case in the time of the great orchid grower. In-door gardening so far from being a lost art at Colston Bassett, is carried on with systematic attention, with constant care, and with unquestioned skill. Much of the work out of doors is done under the instructions of Mrs. Knowles, who has directed her attention to the opening up of vistas, and to the removal of growths which have marred the landscape or interfered with the view. Small shrubs or trees, and even larger specimens, which have got out of place, spoiling the effect of their finer and more leafy brethren, or interfering with the prospect, have good cause to tremble to their very roots if they should be unfortunate enough to attract the attention of the lady of the house, who has not only ordered a quantity of timber near the hall to be hewn down and cast into the fire, but has also caused to be removed from their native soil to a fresh locality, other trees which, in her opinion, have been out of place. Near the house there is a very fine row of yews, supposed by the late Mr. Veitch, of Chelsea, to have been planted 600 years ago, the effect of which is somewhat marred by the obstructive influence of a number of smaller trees of the same class. The obstructives are to be taken up and placed like so many naughty children at the back of their elders, whose proportions they are now hiding from view. Mrs. Knowles has effected many improvements of this kind, and several very pretty bits of pleasure-ground scenery have been brought to light and sight under her dynasty.

As to Mr. Knowles, he perhaps spends much of his time in solving the farming difficulty. He takes considerable interest in his farm, which is within a convenient distance of the house. He has a

large flock of sheep of the famous Shropshire breed, and has taken a number of leading prizes from the sheep classes of several of the agricultural shows—the Royal amongst them. He has some 500 acres of land in cultivation, and he farms it on the best principle. At his farm most of the work is done by means of machinery, moved by steam, even to the drying of wet hay. The stacks are, most of them, under long metal roofs, raised by substantial supports, an arrangement which saves the trouble and expense of thatching, which in these days is often so imperfectly done. If the hay be wet there is a machine for drying it, the moisture being removed and carried away in the form of vapour by means of a fan. The arrangement is perfectly simple, and Mr. Knowles tells me it is so effectual that this last season his hay crop was in no way spoiled by the wet. Mr. Knowles is a constant follower of the chase, and with first-rate hunters in his stables, four packs of hounds meeting within reachable distance of his residence, and plenty of time on his hands, he has ample opportunities of indulging in a pastime which is perhaps even more to his taste than that which he followed more frequently some years ago, when he was master of one of the oldest packs of harriers in the country.

The hall and the church at Colston Bassett are removed from the village. The former has stood the test of time remarkably well ; the latter is the older of the two, and some would say that the time had come when it might with advantage be placed in the hands of the restorers. The church, which stands on an eminence on the verge of the park, was built and endowed by the Abbey of Laund in Leicestershire, and competent authority has fixed its date at about 1293, though it was evidently built on the site of an older church, the Norman pillars of which remain. It was a cruciform building, with north and south aisles and transepts, but the north aisle and north transept were taken down just a century ago, the authorities of that time considering it too large for the limited requirements of the parish. Three of the five sweet-toned bells have quaint pre-Reformation inscriptions on them. On the one of the date 1606 there is this couplet—

My roaring sound doth warning give
That men here cannot always live.

The other two inscriptions are in Latin. In former times part of the village surrounded the church, and in very dry seasons the foundations of houses may be traced. In a map of Queen Elizabeth's time, still in existence, the names of the occupiers of the dwellings may be found. In all probability the village was much more populous than it is now, but when the Fosse road ceased to be the principal artery in this part of the county, the villages in the district became less populous. In the year 1604 the village was visited by a terrible

plague scourge which destroyed a number of the inhabitants and spread alarm throughout the whole district. In presenting these facts I ought to say that my own observation has been very much aided by certain information very kindly furnished me by the Rev. Joshua Brooke, who succeeded his father in the incumbency, which he had held since 1800.

The hall has been altered by successive owners. For instance, the entrance, which was formerly on the south side, is now on the west. From the windows on the south you now look down a fine grove of trees, planted in 1710, and overshadowing what is called the Lord's Walk. The front part of the house looks towards the village, which, however, is hidden from view. The most important internal improvement made by Mr. Knowles is to be observed in the drawing room, which has been extended so as to take in a smaller apartment. This is a long elegant room, full of pretty furniture, and bright with growing ferns and flowers. The walls are liberally covered with water-colours, and the room well supplied with pretty things, among them valuable china vases, and some elegant stands of Indian workmanship. Amongst the water-colours is one larger than the rest, "The Letter Writer," which has attracted such attention that Mr. Knowles was asked to send it to the Philadelphia Exhibition. He allowed it to go across the water, along with a magnificent water-colour by Louis Haghe, which now hangs in the morning room, and is perhaps the best picture in the whole of Mr. Knowles' collection. It represents a Cardinal Mass in the Sistine Chapel, in all the rich colouring and impressive detail which are associated with such a ceremonial. At the back of the altar rises the grand fresco of Michel Angelo, the figures in that masterpiece being faithfully reproduced. The floor of the chapel is thronged with people, some in an attitude of prayer, but the majority standing, while three people kneeling at the altar are receiving some rite at the hands of the priests. The picture is a masterpiece of its kind, and, I am told, it attracted a good deal of attention at the Philadelphia Exhibition.

The whole of the pictures at Colston Bassett are modern. Most of them have been bought by Mr. Knowles from the walls of the Royal Academy at different exhibitions. The majority of them are hung in the dining room and billiard room. Amongst the Academy pictures are two by Mr. G. A. Storey—"Little Swansdown" and "The Blue Girls of Canterbury"—a picturesque procession of girls in the clean, comfortable garb of the institution to which they belong, a work which I remember having seen on the walls of Burlington House. The fine picture by Mr. Ansdell, R.A., where the painter shapes out in firm drawing and truthful colour his conception of Burns' "Poor Mailie,"

"Now, honest Hughoc, dinna fail
 To tell my master a' my tale,
 And bid him burn this curs'd tether,"
 This said, poor Mailie turn'd her head,
 And closed her e'en among the dead,

which tells a pathetic tale of the sufferings of an unfortunate sheep, was likewise purchased from the Royal Academy collection, as also were "The Charcoal Burners," a very fine picture by Beavis, "In the Haunted Chamber," by Mr. Yeames, an Academy associate, supposed to represent a certain mysterious chamber at Belvoir Castle, though I never knew of the existence of such an interesting apartment; a room in Hadden Hall, by Escusarer, painted on panel; Frith's "English Flower Girl," and two very fine landscapes by James Linnell. One of these represents a panic in a hayfield caused by the sudden breaking of a thunderstorm. A thin streak of forked flame has just pierced the dark metallic clouds in the background, two women at work in the field have hastily quitted their labour and are snatching their babes from the sweet scented hay on which they had laid them for safety, and among the male workers there is manifest that sense of alarm which sometimes possesses people when Nature's artillery is practising. This perhaps would not have a place among the six best pictures in the house, but it is a stirring painting, and one that solicits a close inspection. Among that favoured six, a strip of the sea which beats on the Kentish coast, by T. Webster, would certainly have a place. The water is alive, and the crest of one big wave shows that peculiar transparency which is seen the moment before it breaks into foam. In the billiard room is a small picture—one of those blood-red sunsets, which travellers tell us are peculiar to the East, which is worthy of mention, apart from any claims its artistic merit may have. On the back is an inscription which tells that the picture was presented to the late Charles Dickens in 1850, by Roberts, the artist, as a mark of respect for his talent and worth, and in one corner appears the peculiar autograph of the novelist, so that in all probability the picture was formerly at Gad's Hill. I noticed also in the billiard room, associated with the English artists, a good example of the style of the American painter, Bradford, ("The Wrecked Emigrant Ship.") who numbers among his patrons the Queen and the Duke of Sutherland.

FLINTHAM HALL.

FLINTHAM Hall stands just far enough from the old Fosse Road to be removed from the sound of the occasional, and that mostly rustic, traffic, which passes along that broad, continuous highway, still one of the best in the county, after many centuries of wear. There was a populous, and not unprosperous, village of Flintham, which numbered amongst its population the inmates of a great house, long before the present mansion was built. The stones of which its imposing walls are composed, and whose bright, fresh colour may almost be taken as suggestive of the purity of the air which is blown from the surrounding hills, were unquarried when the Husseys, Hackers, and Fletchers had a seat at Flintham, and were of the county families. It is not half a century old yet, having been built by the late Colonel Hildyard, doubtless at a very great cost, and with a determination to make it one of the leading houses in the county. On the Fosse Road, midway between Bingham and Newark, you come to a lodge which overlooks a winding gravel walk and an ornamental plantation. Before spring has set in, and while the wild winds of March sweep through the leafless branches of the lofty park trees, there are white patches upon the turf, and they look like the remains of a lingering winter. They are natural beds of snowdrops, which grow here in chaste and unchecked luxuriance. On either side of the drive there are some stately specimens of *auricaria imbricata* and *cedrus deodara*, the former of which have had a hard fight for it during the winter. The auricarias with their writhing arms, which seem to have been struck motionless just as they were in the act of making some fantastic curve, are in their proper place along a broad carriage drive.

The entrance to the hall is under the tower, and you do not get an adequate idea of the extent of the building upon first acquaintance. Its proportions are best seen from the park or the gardens. The external appearance of the house suggests the possession of elegant apartments. There is one room at Flintham which is much handsomer than any of the rest, and fulfils every purpose for which the principal apartment in a great house is designed. It is now used as a drawing room, but if one called it the library, or the central hall, or the saloon, no grave error would be committed. At one end of this large and well-apportioned room, is a smaller apartment, which

is separated by a kind of screen supported by marble pillars ; at the other is a conservatory, lofty, cool, and well filled with plants, an arrangement which is no less artistic than convenient. This conservatory, though small as regards the area it covers, has been carried up to a considerable height and fitted with great taste. It is ornamented with mirrors ; there is a fountain of white marble placed opposite to the room by way of which you enter this miniature crystal palace, and at intervals there appear brackets upon which are placed small marble figures of nymphs and goddesses. The gas burners—gas is made on the premises—are the stamens of so many white lilies, the lips of which are of marble. In the upper part of the principal room, of which the conservatory may almost be described as a continuation, is a gallery, which is reached by a small spiral staircase, and from which one may more closely inspect the richly decorated ceiling. On one side of the gallery is placed a range of bookshelves, well stocked with a miscellaneous collection of literature, part of which belongs to the owner of the mansion and part to his tenant. On the other side is a range of plate glass, distributed in the form of windows, in the midst of which is a kind of alcove or recess with easy chair and table. This is a favourite place with most people who visit Flintham, and who wish to be alone. It commands a full and uninterrupted view of one of the brightest and most cheerful prospects in the county.

Flintham Hall occupies a somewhat elevated site in the midst of a landscape which is not hilly. The country about is generally flat and of a decidedly pastoral description, but the park supplies a cheerful expanse of scenery, broken and diversified by a somewhat scattered sylvan growth, and acquiring an added variety by the presence of a small lake, in the middle of which is a pretty summer-house, built upon a little island. In the park alone, which is some two hundred and fifty acres in extent, there is much to please the eyes of those who happen to look out of the windows, whether of the gallery or the ground floor, in the full light of midday, or when the sinking sun is reddening the surface of the lake. There is in this handsome saloon, which I will call the library, a singularly fine projecting mantelpiece of carved wood. This was purchased by Mr. Hildyard at one of the exhibitions, and it is said that a desire to have so handsome a piece of furniture set off to the best advantage, prompted the owner to build this superb apartment, in which the proportions of the mantelpiece are now effectively displayed. On either side of the fireplace a large picture is hung. Those who are familiar with the best known examples of Snyders art, will recognise that master in the library. The picture represents an affray between dogs and foxes (not, I think, a common kind of warfare, that is, when waged by three foxes against twice the number of dogs), in which the dogs appear to be getting the worst of it.

The dining room contains the bulk of the pictures—chiefly family portraits of the Hildyards and Thorotons (the late Colonel Hildyard was a Thoroton before he married Miss White, the heiress). Dr. Thoroton, the historian and antiquarian, was one of the family, and his portrait is among the dining room collection. Sir Robert Hildyard, of whom more hereafter, sat in his early days to Sir Joshua Reynolds, and later to Sir Thomas Lawrence, and the results are at present preserved on canvas in the dining room at Flintham, together with several of the Darcys, who were collaterally related. Cuyp and Ruysdael are both represented on the rooms of this beautiful residence, and there are two good examples of the art of Philip Mercier, and one of that of a celebrated Dutchman—"The Prodigal Son." The portraits in the drawing room are let into the panelling, which completely pervades the wall, with such nicety, that they look like little panel pictures. They are mostly the portraits of Mr. Hildyard's ancestors—the members of a family, one of whom, as commander for the Lancastrians, beat off the Yorkists, at Towton, held the bridge, and was distinguished for his general bravery. Occupying a prominent position amongst this family group, is a portrait of Mr. Thomas Blackborne Thoroton Hildyard, who has represented the southern division of this county for many years, and is as fine a specimen of an English country gentleman as you would meet with in a day's march. The picture over the mantelpiece, evidently painted some years ago, gives, I think, an imperfect idea of Mr. Hildyard's presence, when, ten years ago, it was more familiar in the district than now.

Mr. Hildyard belongs to a family of distinction, and one of his ancestors, called Robin of Reddisdale, the holder of the bridge at Towton, was a distinguished personage during the reigns of three English kings. He was created a baronet at the Restoration. John Hildyard was Recorder of Stamford, Grantham, and Leicester, at a much later date. Yorkshire, I believe, counts the Hildyards among its county families, and Winestead Hall, in the neighbourhood of Hull, is still one of their seats ; but possessing as they do a splendid mansion in Nottinghamshire, and taking the position they have taken in the affairs of the county, that branch to which the member for South Nottinghamshire belongs, may fairly be placed among the leading families of this shire. Colonel Hildyard, who died fifty years ago, was distinguished for his liberality. He considered during his lifetime that the church, which adjoins the hall at Flintham, wanted restoring. and at his own cost he put it in a proper state of repair. He rebuilt the tower and nave, and left the chancel as it is now, except that it was then perhaps, in a better state of preservation. He may have thought that as little as possible should be left to perpetuate the memory of a vicar whose eccentricity led him to do menial work for the farmers for the sake of earning a few

pence. You can walk out of the conservatory at the hall into the church, where there is a great family pew with faded hangings, a roomy west gallery which appears to be little used, and in the corner of the chancel part of an armed knight mutilated and imperfect. Colonel Hildyard was succeeded by his son, who was first elected for South Nottinghamshire in 1846. In that year Lord Lincoln was appointed to the Chief Secretaryship for Ireland under Sir Robert Peel, and Mr. Hildyard opposed his re-election for the county. At that time two questions attracted public attention—the repeal of the Corn Laws and the grant of £30,000 towards the Roman Catholic College at Maynooth. Lord Lincoln was a staunch advocate both for the grant and for Free Trade, and he had opposed to him the formidable influence of his own father. At the poll Mr. Hildyard secured the seat by a majority of 687 votes. Mr. Hildyard held the seat until 1852, when he retired to make way for Lord Newark—the present Earl Manvers—having sat during the intervening period with Colonel Rolleston, and afterwards with Mr. Robert Bromley, as his colleagues. After an interval of fourteen years, on the death of the Earl of Chesterfield and the succession of Lord Stanhope, one of the then members for the southern division of the county, to the peerage, Mr. Hildyard was returned for his old constituency unopposed, and was always returned without a contest, until the general election of 1880, when the Liberals, in the person of Mr. S. B. Bristowe, made an unsuccessful attempt to oust him. When the late Lord Belper resigned the chairmanship of Quarter Sessions, Mr. Hildyard was appointed by his brother magistrates to succeed his lordship, and he held the post for about three years.

In the Library at Flintham, belonging to Captain Lane, the present occupant of the house, is a very fine drawing, representing the kindly features of an elderly gentleman attired in an ecclesiastical vestment, and those of a lady somewhat younger. The picture is beautifully executed, and it represents Canon and Mrs. Lane, the father and mother of the gentleman who has recently come to reside in this county, and who has occupied at various periods three of its best known houses—Colwick Hall, Wollaton Hall, and now Flintham Hall—three houses which have very few features in common. Captain Douglas Lane, who has been long enough in the county to win a popularity which does not fall to the share of every new comer, and which wealth alone cannot purchase, comes of a Staffordshire family—the Lanes of King's Bromley—who are said to have come to England with the Conqueror. His father was an honorary canon of Canterbury and rector of a Kentish parish, and his ancestor was the Colonel John Lane who was instrumental in saving the life of King Charles the Second at the Battle of Worcester—a saving which may, or may not, have given the country cause for gratitude, but which being a brave act, Colonel Lane was rewarded with a

special badge of honour, and a peerage was offered to the family but declined. Captain Lane, of this county, the descendant of these, formerly held a commission in the 17th Lancers. He has now laid down his arms and adopted the life of a country gentleman, the pursuits connected with which appear to be admirably suited to his tastes. He is a first-class shot, and his well stocked gun room at Flintham may be taken as evidence that much of his time is spent out of doors. His own private room commands a view of the stables (and at Flintham there is ample provision for horses,) and furnishes some further evidence as to the nature of his tastes. Captain Lane is an owner of racehorses, though latterly he has abandoned the turf, and retired still further into the arcadia which is open to a country gentleman with abundant means at his disposal. But he has had some good blood in his stables, and as far back as 1855 a horse of his, named Epaminondas, won the Chester Cup to the delight of the owner, who likes a horse to win on its merits. Small races he has won in different parts of the country, and his nomination has always been looked upon as a "square thing."

GROVE.

GROVE originally belonged to Roger de Busli, who was possessed of no fewer than a hundred and seventy-four manors in Nottinghamshire. These were granted to him by William the Conqueror, and Grove and West Retford were amongst the number. In the reign of Henry the Second, the Grove estate passed to Gilbert de Arches, and by marriage it was carried into the de Hercy family in the following reign. With the de Hercys—a family of title, it remained for a great number of years, until Sir John de Hercy granted it to one of his sisters, and co-heiress, who had married Mr. George Neville, of Ragnall. We now find Grove in the possession of the Nevilles, and it so remained until the latter end of the seventeenth century, when Sir Edward Neville sold it to Sir Cresswell Levinz, one of the judges of the Common Pleas. The son of this gentleman, who resided at the Grove after his father's death, was one of the members for East Retford, and afterwards for the county. Grove continued in the possession of the Levinzs for three generations. In the year 1762, one of the family sold the whole of the estate to Mr. Anthony Eyre, of Rampton, whose family retained it until by marriage, it came into the possession of the Vernons, who reside there now. Piercy, in his history of Retford, says :—"A large brick house in the Old English style with gable ends and mullion windows, had been erected at Grove, at a period which is not known, and had undergone considerable alterations. During the wars between the houses of York and Lancaster, the Hercy family with their neighbours the Stanhopes of Rampton, were active supporters of the House of Lancaster, and during the arduous struggle for superiority were frequently surrounded by dangers of no common kind. Afterwards as a mark of their zeal and as a remembrance of their past services, they each of them inserted in the walls of their respective mansions, a sculptured rose and crown, the device assumed by Henry the Seventh and by many of his adherents. This device was placed in the house at Grove, over a large Gothic window which lighted the principal staircase. Sir Cresswell Levinz and his son made some alterations in the house, and Mr. Eyre, after he purchased it, entirely altered the character of it, removing the whole of the ancient roof, and pulling down a considerable portion of the south-west front, in place of which, under the direction of Mr. Carr, the architect, he built a suite of rooms of handsome and more convenient dimensions. In making this alteration he took down a

stone tower, which must have been built in the time of Queen Elizabeth, and under it were found a considerable number of coins of that Queen's reign."

Grove Hall is one of the best houses in the north of the county ; the estate in the midst of which it stands is, from its formation, and from its advantages of richly-wooded park and plantation, one of the most picturesque in the locality. There are some charming places round about Retford, and this is one of them. It is only three miles distant from the ancient borough just named, and is well known to most of the people who live there, not only because it is a large and important house, employing a goodly number of people to do the work of a considerable private establishment, but because the family which has resided there for many, many years has taken a permanent interest in Retford affairs, and has always been looked up to as one possessing more than ordinary influence. The Vernons of Grove are as well known in the north as any of the leading families are in the south, though they have not been so long resident in the county as a number of other families that I could name. They are a branch of a family which has a peer for its head, and whose members have held distinguished places in the Senate and in the Church. One of them was an archbishop of York—Archbishop Harcourt ; several of the family have been returned to Parliament by various constituencies. One of them represented the neighbouring borough of Newark from 1852 to 1857. Mr. Granville Harcourt Vernon, who died only a few years ago, and whose bones repose under a spreading sycamore in the quiet churchyard at Grove, represented East Retford in the Whig interest. The modest headstone recording the name of the late lord of Grove and the date of his decease, illustrates one of the leading traits of his character. His life was one of the simplest, his habits were quiet and unobtrusive. But he was a man of the world, and in his time had been looked upon in high quarters with respect and deference. His successor, the gentleman who now owns the important estate of the Vernons in this county, extending over some 4,000 acres at Grove, is Mr. Evelyn Harcourt Vernon, a canon of the Church, the second son of the venerable squire to whom I have just referred. Until he came to the property, Mr. Vernon was rector of Cotgrave, a village largely owned by Lord Manvers ; he is now both lord and rector of Grove, and in the tiny church near his charming residence he not unfrequently officiates.

The house over which the rector presides is a conspicuous object in a charming landscape. Perhaps its proportions would have been less familiar, if the brickwork of which its walls are composed had not been coated with staring stucco—a piece of questionable taste, for which a former proprietor was responsible. Now it is a white house, dominating in landscape of exquisite beauty. It enjoys a commanding situation, and its front overlooks an expanse

of park land which is studded with old and majestic trees, and is green with swelling turf. The view is charming ; the eye never tires of it. Eastward lies Lincoln, with its superb minster, the towers of which are visible from here on a clear day ; westward are the sturdy oaks, delicate silver birches, and dark pines of Sherwood Forest, and further away you may see the hills of Derbyshire. The immediate neighbourhood is full of interest, for the Romans had a station not far away, and relics of the past have been dug from the fertile soil, upon which everything seems to flourish. In the house one is shown several things which are connected with its early history, and with that of the family to whom the estate originally belonged. In the hall there is a striking portrait of Sir Hardolph Wastneys, the old lord of Headon, not far away, who made Grove his principal residence, and whose great niece was espoused to Mr. Anthony Eyre. At Headon there was once a house of some consequence, but there are no traces of it now. Here, too, is a picture of Sir Gervase Eyre, who was killed at the defence of Newark Castle, and two portraits of Canon Vernon's ancestors in the costumes of a remote period. In the library are some rare old books, amongst them a very fine copy of the first published edition of Shakespear's works, with the red edges which stamp its value ; and hung upon the walls are engraved portraits of men who were once celebrated in the county and elsewhere—the late Mr. Vernon, Mr. Gally Knight, Archbishop Harcourt, Sir Hamilton Seymour the diplomat, Lord Carlingford, and others. Several of the rooms in this part of the house were added by the late Mr. Vernon ; other parts of it were built in the reigns of Henry VIII. and Queen Anne. On the main staircase there hangs a piece of curious tapestry work, upon which an immense amount of labour has been expended, and upon which wonderful geographical knowledge is displayed. This is a complete map of Nottinghamshire, worked by Miss Mary Eyre, in 1632. The work is still perfect, and the name of every place in the county is marked with accuracy, and in the deffest manner. Formerly the dining room was upstairs ; this apartment is now used as a dressing room, and it contains some exquisite carving, believed to be by Gibbons. In one of the principal of the lower rooms are three fine pictures, supposed to be of James II., of the Duchess of Portsmouth, and of Nell Gwyn, and a massive carved sideboard of Venetian origin. The gardens at Grove are famous. They were formed in the year 1798, and at that time they were amongst the finest in the county. Even now they grow marvellously fine flowers and fruit—gloxinias, which for beauty of form and purity of tint, could hardly be surpassed, grapes, which for lusciousness and profusion would bear comparison with the produce of larger and more recently made vineries ; and there is a big kitchen garden, set round with rose trees and smart flowers, which make a brave show, and fill the air with perfume.

KELHAM HALL.

ALMOST everyone, who is in the habit of travelling on the Midland line between Nottingham and Newark, has had a glimpse of the noble building known as Kelham Hall, the seat of Mr. Manners-Sutton. As you cross the river Trent by the railway bridge near Newark you see across the fields and amongst the trees, which are not tall enough to conceal its lofty tower and high stack of chimneys, the changing outline of one of the stateliest houses in this part of England. Twenty years ago or more, a fire, the origin of which has never been satisfactorily ascertained, wrecked Kelham Hall, and left its four bare walls standing, charred and grim, amid the same trees which with ampler boughs shelter and protect from eastern blasts, its more magnificent successor. On the 27th of November, 1857, after the servants at the only barely completed mansion had retired to rest, the alarm of fire was given. The owner and his lady were abroad on that date, but their two children—the marriage of the lady who in the account of the disaster is described as a little girl three and a half years of age, was celebrated with great festivity only a few years ago—were in the house at the time. The results of this fearful fire were most disastrous. At the time of its occurrence the house, as I have said, had only just been restored at very great expense, and at the very time Mons. Verreau, the eminent French artist, was on the premises, giving the finishing touch to the costly work with which he had been entrusted. Money would repair the loss sustained by the destruction of the building, but it could not replace the heirlooms which became a prey to the flames. Four valuable historical portraits were consumed; those of James II., William III., Queen Anne, and Lady Ann Hyde. A number of family portraits which were with difficulty saved from the wreck, hang upon the walls of the present mansion, but these that I have named were damaged beyond redemption. The music room, drawing room, and billiard room were completely swept away. Upstairs valuable furniture, with drapings of damask and point lace, was burnt, and damage to the extent of some £15,000 was done in a very few hours.

Singularly enough, the ancient fabric which stood on this site was destroyed by fire in the reign of William and Mary. Some five years after the burning of the restored mansion there had been created a new Kelham Hall of magnificent proportion, and of an

architectural beauty superior to that possessed by its predecessor. It stands there now, a grand ornament to an exquisite landscape. The late Sir Gilbert Scott supplied the designs, and Kelham Hall is said to be one of that great architect's most successful works. It is built in the Italian style, of red brick with stone facings, and its sumptuous front, seen from the road, suggests many lofty and beautiful rooms. Approaching the hall from Newark you are only made aware of its whereabouts by furtive glimpses of red bricks, for there is much foliage around Kelham. Without possessing elevation, which is generally considered a necessary advantage, Kelham Hall enjoys a most beautiful situation, and nature has given lavish aid to its improvement. It commands a lovely bit of river scenery. Right in front of its windows the Trent flows broad and rapid, making angry little eddies where its course is impeded, and sweeping swiftly through the wide arches of the handsomest bridge in the county. Away to the right the spire of St. Mary Magdalene's Church at Newark rises sharp and bold against the sky, and all about are the fine tall trees—ash, oak, chestnut, elm, and fir—which thickly stud the twenty-five acres of park land that belong to the Kelham estate. As I walk along the broad, leaf-covered, gravel drive that leads to the house a pair of pheasants, which have come to look for something better than "hedge-fruit," utter their harsh, startling note, and hide themselves in the thick shrubs which skirt either side of the walk. The immediate approach of the house is through a spacious glass-covered court. It ought, perhaps, to be described as a conservatory, for it contains an assemblage of palms and trees of foreign extraction, which flourish with topical luxuriance. It is a magnificent house inside, and the arrangements are in exquisite taste. The ceilings of the several rooms are wonders of beauty. They ought almost to be called roofs, for they are arched and slanting, beautifully mounded and wondrously decorated, the designs showing a delicacy of execution which could only have been achieved by first-rate artists. The Music Hall is a superb room, with a floor of polished oak, inlaid with rare woods which have been set with every care and precision. There are pillars of polished granite, arches of stone, mullioned windows, and a spacious fireplace with a kind of slanting canopy supported by granite pillars. In the principal drawing room the ceiling—the ceilings form one of the great charms of Kelham, is even more beautiful than that of the music gallery and the other rooms. It is not a large room, but it is exquisitely furnished with a suite of green velvet. The walls are panelled with the same material, and between the panels are hung some three or four bright modern pictures of large size. The pillar in the centre of the room, to which the painted ceiling dips for support, is very beautiful. It is a triad of the most delicious marble of that rare and richly marked creamy variety, which is so much

thought of. The upper part of the pillar has a moulding of metal elaborately wrought. The stonework of the windows of this room shows very fine carving, and the pillars placed at the sides of each one of them are of Australian marble, dark and wavy. The several liquid mirrors with which the room is ornamented add to its brightness.

In another part of the house there is a small drawing-room panelled with cedar, which gives out a delicious odour that never dies away, and here again one is charmed with the ceiling, which shows the blue tint of a summer sky. There is a great profusion of stone carving about the house. It forms the frames of the windows ; it appears about the pillars, and there is more of it outside. The dining room, the morning room, the billiard room, and the upstairs rooms are all very beautiful, and perpetuate the general idea of beauty with which one is impressed. Such a gigantic work was the re-building of Kelham Hall that one or two of the rooms are yet in an unfinished state. One apartment with stained glass windows was intended for a chapel, but it has never been completed ; and there is yet another unfinished room, and one would think the house was large enough for all requirements if it never was finished. In what is called the morning room there is an exquisite miniature on ivory of Mrs. Manners-Sutton, painted some twenty years ago by an artist who achieved some considerable celebrity in this department of his profession, and on the walls is a portrait in oil of the owner of Kelham, the work of a French painter. There are some half-dozen or more family portraits in this room, including those of Sir William and Lady Hungerford, Lady Lexington, wife of Robert first Lord Lexington, of whom Mr. Manners-Sutton is the lineal descendent. Several much-prized portraits were destroyed by the fire of 1857, but others were happily preserved, and Kelham now boasts a good collection of family pictures, the larger of which are hung in interesting array on the ample wall flanking the main staircase. These furnish us with a history of the family. There are here Lord George Manners-Sutton, who achieved a military celebrity ; the Hon. William George Sutton, son of the second Lord Lexington ; Bridget, daughter and heiress of the second Baron Lexington, by whose marriage the family became united with the house of Manners (the name borne by the Duke of Rutland) ; Robert created Baron Lexington, of Averham, in the reign of the first Charles, and Mary, a daughter of the house of St. Leger, who became wife of Lord Lexington. In Mr. Manners-Sutton's business room there are one or two pictures and a portrait over the mantelpiece of the third Duke of Rutland's son, John, Marquis of Granby, who, judging from the expression of healthy, and settled contentment that the canvas shows, was well satisfied with his lot.

The table in the room is strewn with letters, papers, and books of reference, for Mr. Manners-Sutton is a thorough man of business, and when at Kelham he spends much time in his comfortable little business room amongst his books and papers. The principal upstairs rooms at Kelham are superbly fitted, and here again there is some fine ceiling work. From a boudoir upstairs that charming view towards Newark is to be had in its best aspect. The gardens outside are just what the pleasure grounds of a great house like this should be. They are extensive and tastefully laid out in spacious lawns, ornamental flower beds and trim walks, and in summer, when the flowers are in bloom, they look bright and beautiful. The grey church with its low tower, grassy, silent church yard

Where lies the turf in many a mouldering heap,

and dark yews can be reached through the gardens. Inside there is a monument of fine statutory marble, to the memory of the last Lord Lexington and his lady; outside, in the tower, there was, at the time of my visit, a battered clock, which at a quarter to eight, some time or another, was afflicted with paralysis, and had never "gone" since.

Mr. Manners-Sutton's family is of considerable antiquity. His ancestors were the Lords Lexington, who took their title from a village of that name in the north of the county, and one of whom served his country as ambassador to the Court of Turkey. Henry de Lexington, the fourth baron, died in 1257, when the title became extinct. William de Sutton came in for a considerable share of the property of this noble, and his descendant, Robert Sutton, was in 1646 created Baron Lexington of Averham, but at the death of his successor in 1723, the title again became extinct, and has not since been revived. From the year 1792 till his death, in 1805, Charles Manners-Sutton was Archbishop of Canterbury, and his son, who bore the same name, was for many years Speaker of the House of Commons. Mr. John Henry Manners-Sutton has had some political experiences. In the year 1847, when a young man, he was elected Member of Parliament for Newark as a Liberal Conservative. His opponent at that election was Colonel Stuart, Q.C., a London gentleman, who came forward in the Protection interests, Mr. Manners-Sutton being the free-trade candidate. At the nomination which took place in July of the year just given, Mr. John Handley proposed Mr. J. H. Manners-Sutton as a fit and proper person to represent the borough, a nomination which was seconded by Councillor Lacey, and the show of hands was in favour of Mr. Sutton. Mr. Manners-Sutton's speech on that occasion was both temperate and modest. He admitted the grave charge of youth that

had been brought against him, and told the electors that "the only ground on which he could rely for the honour he sought was that of friendship." He was elected by a very appreciable majority, but he did not remain in Parliament to see education extended to all classes of the State—an education such as in these days is provided for the poorest child. Mr. Manners-Sutton is a magistrate for the county and was High Sheriff of Nottinghamshire in 1863.

KINGSTON.

WHEN the late Lord Belper, as plain Mr. Edward Strutt, acquired the Kingston property, there was no house in the neighbourhood which could possibly be appropriated as the residence of a man of his estate and position. The house where Babington once lived, whose wicked plot to overthrow the ruling monarch, and to re-establish the supremacy of the Roman Catholic religion, brought him to a disgraceful death, had disappeared, and the estate which had been owned by a succession of illustrious personages was mansionless. Mr. Strutt was probably struck with the quiet pastoral beauty of the surrounding country, and he built himself a handsome mansion at Kingston, selecting a favourable eminence for its site and the beautiful architecture of the Elizabethan period for its lines. Built of good stone, laid with geometric precision, Kingston Hall will last for ages, and will be a conspicuous object in this admirable bit of border landscape, long after its present lord has passed away. For some thirty-five years the late noble owner, who was no less distinguished for his knowledge of, and connection with, the affairs of State, than for his scholarly attainments and profound erudition, made Kingston his home, and within the solid walls of his Nottinghamshire residence, with a magnificent collection of the gems of modern literature to hand, and surrounded by works of art, which at this point may be best described as being every one of them good ; with beautiful grounds in which to spend so many of the sunny hours as he chose, he enjoyed that rest which was so essential at the end of a long—a very long and active life. The late Lord Belper was an ex-Minister of State, who had spent a long life in the service of both branches of Legislature, and had been called to a place in the Privy Council of the Sovereign, and for a long period discharged the duties of a chairman of Quarter Sessions with all the dignity and legal acumen of a distinguished judge. In his bright sitting room at Kingston, under the spell of his gentle manners, of his cordial, homely welcome, one might be pardoned for forgetting these facts, and for regarding him simply as a kind-hearted old man, whose engaging conversation could be listened to with a complacency undisturbed by any consciousness of the disparity of position which exists between the hearer and the listener. One felt no hesitation in following him to a small cabinet which stands in a corner of the

billiard saloon, and one listened with delight to the few words uttered with the authority of a scholar, in which he told the history of some half-dozen queer looking specimens of old pottery, which were unearthed on the estate not very long ago. A question arose as to whether they were of Anglo-Saxon or some other primitive manufacture. Lord Belper thought they are Anglo-Saxon, and I should not imagine anyone would dispute the accuracy of his judgment. In the same cabinet is some Etruscan ware, which was brought from Athens, together with a number of other curiosities, by the late Bishop of Chichester. One listened with equal pleasure to the concise history from the same lips of a singular unfinished painting by West, once president of the Royal Academy, which hung in his lordship's room, and in which the figures of three distinguished personages are introduced. Since my visit to Kingston, the first Baron Belper has passed away, and his son, then Mr. Henry Strutt, bears his title and owns the estate.

Lord Belper is the head of a wealthy family, whose representatives have not inherited their property from ancestors who received enormous grants from lavish monarchs. Some of them have amassed wealth in the walks of commerce, and there have been members of the family whose names were, and are, associated with acts of munificence and benevolence. It was Mr. Joseph Strutt who gave an arboretum to the people of Derby. The late Lord Belper was the descendant of Mr. Jedediah Strutt, of Belper, his great grandfather; his father was Mr. William Strutt, of St. Helen's House, Derby, where the Grammar School of that town now stands. After passing a successful career at Cambridge, where he attained the highest degrees the University could bestow, Mr. Edward Strutt entered Parliament for Derby before the passing of the Reform Bill. He represented that borough for eighteen years, during the two last of which he was First Commissioner of Railways, a post then of some considerable importance. In 1848 Mr. Strutt lost his seat for the neighbouring town, on petition, but in 1851 he found a seat for Arundel, in Sussex. In consequence of religious and political differences between Lord Arundel, the sitting member, and the Duke of Norfolk, his relative, the former accepted the Chiltern Hundreds in the year above named, and Mr. Strutt was elected in his stead. Mr. Strutt represented this small constituency for one year, and then came to Nottingham, for which town he sat in Parliament until 1856, when, in recognition of his services to the State, he was raised to the peerage under the title and sign of Baron Belper, having previously held the Ministerial appointment of Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster. Such is a brief and bare outline of the career of the distinguished nobleman, who succeeded an equally distinguished peer in the office of Lord-Lieutenant of the County, and whose intellect at the advanced age of eighty was, perhaps, as keen and as clear as at any period of his life.

Though the mansion at Kingston-upon-Soar is too new to lay claim to historic associations, there are some very interesting facts connected with the bygone history of the village. Anthony Babington, who, in 1588, was the ostensible leader of a diabolical scheme, which had for its object the assassination of Queen Elizabeth, a general insurrection, and an invasion of the country by the Powers of France and Spain, in order to raise to the British Throne the unfortunate Mary Queen of Scots, and to re-establish the Roman Catholic religion, had a mansion at Kingston. Babington belonged to one of the leading county families whose representatives were seated at Kingston for several generations. In the pretty village church half a mile from the Hall, there is a handsome monument to their memory, and a piece of stone screenwork whose like is not to be found in any part of the county. It may possibly have been at Kingston that Babington and the priest Ballard conceived the outline of that plot which brought them both to the gallows. The manor has subsequently belonged to Gilbert, Earl of Shrewsbury, and to a former Duke of Leeds. These are matters which have a legitimate place in any account of this residence, but it is with the Kingston of to-day that I have to deal ; to give my readers some idea of the nature of the contents of Lord Belper's mansion, and to convey to them, if it were possible, some of the impressions that I gained during the few pleasant hours I was permitted to spend there on a beautiful day in the early part of the year. There are some very fine works of art in the Kingston collection. We are not all art critics ; we cannot all of us appreciate the subtleties of merit which the trained and cultivated judge of pictorial art detects on a canvas ; but we know when we are in the presence of a master, and if we can find nothing specially interesting in a gallery of family portraits—of cavaliers and courtiers, who may or may not have been virtuous and good, we can find an almost unspeakable delight in the grand masses of light and shadow, the transparency of still pool or rippling brook of a Ruysdaal, or the charm of colour in a Wynants or a Berchem. The pictures at Kingston are all good. Some thirty of them, distributed over different parts of the house, were purchased by the first Lord Belper from the famous collection of the Duke D'Alberg, and they are all of them very fine specimens of the masters whose names they bear.

Let us take a general glance at this very valuable collection, the existence of which, it is fair to suppose, is not generally known. In the library, with its rows upon rows of well-bound and well-read books, its lofty ceiling and handsome proportions, there is fixed over the mantel-piece, in a deep framing of oak, a grand composition by Vandyck. It is a procession of Bacchanalian boys, one of whom is leading a panther, which is bearing the drowsy Wine god. There are a number of figures in the picture—rosy-limbed children in

various attitudes, and the composition is one which possesses all the splendour of a Titian. This picture long adorned the Balbi Palace in Genoa, and was originally painted for that family by the famous artist whose name it bears. A large portion of the D'Alberg collection is spread over the walls of the drawing room. My attention was drawn to two fine specimens of the work of Jacob Ruysdaal's spirited pencil, which rarely touched any subject that did not include a river, a brook, a ford, or water of some kind. One of these is a view of the Castle of Bentheim, and the hill on which the castle stands is bathed in glorious sunlight. It is said to be one of the finest productions of the artist. On the same walls is a fine specimen of the joint work of three of the most eminent masters of the Dutch school—Vander Heyden and the brothers Adrian and William Vandervelde. Not only the pictures of Vander Hayden, but those of Ruysdaal and even of the great Wynants, whose disciple he was, owe much of their beauty and worth to the embellishment of Adrian Vandervelde. The beautiful slave engaged in dissolving pearls, is by Guido ; that chaste picture of the Virgin and Child, remarkable for its natural tone of colour, and truth of expression, was painted by Andrea Vannuchi, commonly called Del Sarto, the famous Florentine, who has been described as prince of the Tuscan school. Amongst the other pictures which form part of Lord Belper's magnificent purchase is a sketch in chiaroscuro, by Rubens, of Christ bearing the cross, representing the procession to Calvary ; in another part of the mansion there is a fine head by the same master, which formerly belonged to the Elector of Bavaria, and was preserved in the gallery at Munich. Returning to the drawing room, one is permitted to make a passing study of the art of such masters as Wynants, who is here represented by a couple of landscapes, Delorme, Nicholas Berchem, Vanderneer, and Polemburg, the last-named of whom excelled as a flesh painter. One of Berchem's pictures here is a bridge over the Tiber, and in the foreground is the white horse, which this painter was so fond of introducing into his compositions—a work remarkable for the power of its pencilling, and the effective tone of the colouring. Vanderneer painted moonlight effects perhaps as no other artist did either before or since his time, and Lord Belper has a fine example of this artist's speciality in his drawing room at Kingston, free from that intense blackness which characterises some of his works. It is a river scene in Holland, and the moon rising behind an old mill illumines the somewhat weird landscape with a soft and silvery light. The other portion of the purchase has found its way into the dining room. Here, above the mantel-piece, is a grand painting by Weenix—dead game with somelandscape in the background. A dead hare, painted with such fidelity that one would hardly be alarmed if the draught from an open window disturbed its fur, is a prominent object in the picture. The

representation of the Campa Vaccino at Rome is by Romeyne ; the figures were introduced by Cornelius Bega. Three admirable works by Wright, of Derby, which hang in this goodly company, are not unworthy to be mentioned in conjunction with those masters who have contributed so largely to the Belper collection. Wright's pictures are ever becoming scarcer and more valuable, and the fact that he is allowed so much space on the walls at Kingston is sufficient testimony to the excellence of his work. Two of the best of the family portraits at Kingston came from his pencil and brush. Amongst this class are two portraits by Linnel, and an admirable portrait of the first Lord Belper by Richmond, whose likenesses are always faithful. In other parts of the house are pictures by Tintoretto, whose art here is represented by a mythological subject ; Holbein, Cuyp, Sebastian Ricci (*The Last Supper*), Isaac and Adrian Ostade, the elder Teniers, Maas, and Frank Hals, who may perhaps be classed with Vandyck, as the greatest of portrait painters. Hals' portrait of the two boys singing in the streets, is amongst a number of other pictures in one of the upstairs corridors at Kingston, and it bears evidence of that extraordinary rapidity of execution for which the artist was remarkable.

Two or three excessively cold days during a recent winter, destroyed acres of shrubs. Laurels and bays, whose development had been the work of years, were utterly ruined, and there they remain so many clusters of withered leaves in the midst of the rich foliage of late spring. The frost knew no distinction. It chilled the life out of the shrubs in the gardens and pleasure grounds of the rich ; it worked equal ruin in the few roods of ground in which the working man had planted his rose trees. Here and there in the pleasure grounds at Kingston, small open spaces were left by the removal of laurels ; and graceful shapes of shrivelled foliage, shown by *Cedrus Deodara* and evergreen oak, marked the ruin wrought by those two or three cruel days. But there still remain innumerable sturdy and graceful firs of different varieties. The common pine, the Cedar of Lebanon, the spruce fir, the Wellingtonia, and other favourite shrubs bravely lived through the hard winter, and were left to impart picturesqueness and beauty to the Kingston gardens. It is a pleasure garden of shrubs and emerald turf—not flat and conventional, but undulating and diversified. A lake of some nine acres extent, has been formed in the grounds, and this is agreeably broken by projections of sward, so that it has a variety of pleasant aspects. In one part of the garden there is a patch of ground bright with the turquoise stars of *myosotis*, the pale petals of primrose, and the modest colours of some of the commonest spring flowers. This plot, I was told, was the Dowager Lady Belper's special care, and really it is one of the prettiest bits in the grounds. Under ranges of glass, pines, grapes, peaches, and nectarines are grown in abundance and

perfection, and flowers and plants are warmed into exotic brilliance in the spacious stove houses. One of them is a bower of pale yellow roses this morning ; another contains a wealth of geraniums of dazzling brightness. Not far from the margin of the lake a cluster of miniature tombstones publishes facts concerning the canine mortality of Kingston, and furnishes an assurance that "Sprite," "Madge," "Fritz," and a number of other defunct favourites, have received a decent interment in unconsecrated ground. Beyond the gardens is the estate, covering some 3,000 acres, some 400 of which are farmed by Lord Belper's bailiff. A good deal of planting has been done during the time the property has been in the hands of the Strutts, and the limits of the estate are being gradually extended.

KIRKLINGTON HALL.

THE report of a breechloader comes from among the trees on the well-wooded slope which shelters Kirklington Hall from the severity of biting winds, and redeems a stretch of country belonging to the house from the tameness which is sometimes associated with pastoral landscape. The career of a luckless rabbit is terminated, and the report rolls down the slope and dies away at a crescent-shaped lake, the noise being loud enough to cause a hatch of cygnets to crowd closer to their white plumed parent. The sportsman is the representative of an old family, whose name has been associated with Kirklington for more than a century. Duly entered records in the College of Arms furnish proof of the connection of the Whethams with the Sotherons, and the representatives of the first-named family, who now own the soil here, ought to feel proud of that connection whenever they visit the chancel of Kirklington village church. The tablet which is intended to perpetuate the memory of Frank Sotheron, Admiral of the White Squadron of Her Majesty's fleet, describes him as an intelligent landlord, a friend of the poor, a warm-hearted neighbour, and a most affectionate father. As a sailor, he had a character for courage, conduct, and ability, and "with these qualities he joined such engaging manners, such goodness of disposition, and unruffled temper, &c." The tablet publishes the fact that the Admiral represented the county in Parliament for nineteen years, and retired from public life in 1832, I suppose, to spend the rest of his days at Kirklington Hall, enjoying sweet air and fine views of wood and meadow, with those internal comforts which the headquarters of the owner of a large estate afford, and developing those superlative qualities with which his monumental biographer was so profoundly impressed. It is probable that Major-General Whetham, the only son of the Dean of Lismore, who served his Sovereign in the field, was severely wounded at the assault of Monte Video, and died at Kirklington Hall—his own home—had as many virtues as the Admiral, but there is no record of them on the church walls; and the simple tablet which serves to remind Kirklington church-goers of the late Colonel Boddam-Whetham, who died in Rome only a few years ago, and whose widow now holds and administers the estate, is an unobtrusive record of death, setting forth that the deceased was a magistrate for the county, and Colonel of the Sherwood Foresters, without note or comment.

Many, many years ago, Kirklington Hall was owned by a family named More, of whom also we are reminded by a nearly illegible tablet in the church, but more recent generations knew it as the residence of the Whethams. Most of the earlier members of the Whetham family, as well as those of the present century, followed the profession of arms ; several of them have gained considerable distinction in the military branch of service, and some of them have served their country as members of Parliament. From a document that I had the privilege of inspecting, it seems that Nathaniel Whetham, in the early part of the year 1600, was a colonel in the Parliamentary Army, that he was afterwards governor of Portsmouth and M.P. for that borough, in 1655, and for the city of Edinburgh, in 1659. He was one of the council to the Lord Protector Oliver Cromwell, and as a mark of favour for his eminent services to the Parliament and the Commonwealth it was resolved that a sum of £200 per annum be settled on the Colonel and his heirs. The son of this distinguished personage, a barrister-at-law, married a daughter of Adrian Scroop, of Wormsley, in Oxfordshire, a colonel in the army, and one of the Council to Oliver Cromwell. The portrait of this gentleman, who, I believe, suffered death in 1660, is to be seen on the walls at Kirklington Hall to-day. Following up the pedigree we learn that Thomas Whetham, grandson of the governor of Portsmouth, was a lieutenant-general in the army and colonel of the 12th Regiment of Foot, governor of Berwick and Holy Island, and major-general and commander-in-chief of the forces in Scotland, in the absence of the Duke of Argyll and Earl of Stair. This gentleman's son was the John Whetham who purchased the Kirklington estate, and whose remains lie in Hockerton churchyard ; his brother was John Whetham, First Commissioner of Excise, who died in 1737. In more recent times Arthur Whetham was a lieutenant-general and colonel of the 60th Regiment ; lieutenant-governor of the forces in the south-western district, and groom of the bedchamber to the Duke of Cumberland. His brother, John Whetham, an officer in the 12th Regiment of Foot, was killed at the siege of Gibraltar ; the third and youngest brother of this generation was drowned at school. The present head of this old family, whose representatives in different times have filled so many distinguished positions is the lady who now owns Kirklington, Mrs. Boddam-Whetham, daughter of Colonel Whetham, and widow of the late Colonel Boddam-Whetham, well known in this county.

All the great houses of Nottinghamshire do not enshrine treasures of art or objects which legitimately come under the head of specialities. The internal aspect of one very much resembles that of another, and the life of one county family does not differ materially from that of another. One cannot be always

describing the appearance of county drawing rooms, the quality of the furniture, the designs upon the wall papers, or making literary capital out of the contents of the conservatories. In a house like Kirklington, which is occupied by a numerically small county family—for two of the sons of the house are away, and the daughters are married—and on whose walls are a number of portraits about which nothing definite is known, what can one find to write about ? Plenty. In these great country houses with their big rooms, comfortable and handsome furniture, and countless little treasures, the like of which one never sees in town mansions which have been built yesterday ; with their beautiful pleasure grounds and immemorial trees, there is plenty to inspire the pen of a town dweller who lives in a street, and who, if he gives a supper party, has to consider whether his rooms will accommodate more than half-a-dozen guests. To describe Kirklington as a pretty place would convey to many of my readers an indefinite, but not an inaccurate idea of what it is. A big solid house, with white walls, which gleam through the surrounding trees ; a house with a long drawing room, liberally ornamented, with a kind of door-window on one side, and an abundance of glass on the other ; with a comfortable dining room, a library of fair proportions, a billiard room with appliances for playing that favourite game, and a suite of fine rooms upstairs—these are the main features of the house, and the same description would apply to other houses.

Going more into detail, one might say a great deal about the pictures, but, unfortunately most of these are mysteries of portraiture. A number of the portraits belonged to Admiral Sotheron, and Mrs. Boddam-Whetham does not know who those august personages in their antique costumes really are. In the dining room there is a portrait of one of the Whethams, by Wright, of Derby, who has limned him in the costume he wore on the occasion of some festivities when one of the Dukes of Portland came of age ; and there is an old painting by an unknown artist, of Mr. Adrian Scroope, who was connected with the family by marriage. There are a few bright pictures in the drawing room, most of which have been sent from abroad, and in different parts of the house there are specimens of foreign art and spoils of far distant wood and forest, which have been sent home by the eldest son of the house. Weapons, stuffed birds of bright plumage, pictures, books, and a host of other things have been derived from this source. Mr. Boddam-Whetham has travelled much, and has written books on foreign lands. Outside there is much to charm the eye. There is a beautiful lake near the house, whose surface is flecked by animated snow-flakes—white ducks of the purest plumage, and on a little island a pair of swans have brought up their downy brood. This lake is of picturesque formation ; the water is clear and quiet, and there is

a fine meadow on the other side. The fishing rod with its lash of flies, which stands ready-jointed in the porch leading to the entrance hall of the house, may be regarded as evidence that this sheet of water is not uninhabited, and if you watch for a while you may see the fish rising. The lawn about the house is smooth and well kept, and there is plenty of it. The trees are abundant and of almost endless variety, and the house is sheltered on one side by a range of hills well wooded and profusely foliated. On the other side is the village, with its church, its small and substantial school, its picturesque cottages and more pretentious farmsteads. The hall is really in the village, and some two hundred yards of gravel road, flanked by horse chestnuts and other tall trees, bring one within its precincts.

NEWSTEAD ABBEY.

PERHAPS no great house has such a wide reputation as Newstead Abbey. Across the Atlantic its associations are in men's mouths, and Americans coming to England, either on pleasure or business, have found their way to its secluded precincts, have been admitted to its splendid halls, and have been allowed to inspect the few relics that are associated with an imperishable name. They are small things these, but in the eyes of pilgrims, they are covetous possessions, embodying a specific interest, which the Florentine table of *Pietra Dura* work standing in the grand saloon, and worth a fabulous sum of money, cannot boast. The depositary of the famous skull cup is elegant and beautiful—a rich cabinet of gilt and silver and tortoiseshell, but this superb shrine would have escaped notice had the goblet itself been preserved. For the vessel had the Byronic stamp upon it; the poet's lips had touched its rim, and it had contained the Burgandy, which had stirred the blood, and brightened the eyes of the roysterers, whose outrageous mirth has furnished the abbey with a tradition and material for reminiscences that are now eagerly dwelt upon and fully maintained. But the disappearance of the cup has not robbed its owner's memory of a particle of its spell. There are Byron relics at Newstead to-day, and visitors are freely admitted to their presence. The precious collection is preserved in one of the corridors, or galleries, where the light is abundant. There is the plain circular table on which a portion of "Childe Harold" was composed—the largest of the relics. The others are most of them mere trifles, but possessing an interest which loses nothing of its hold as they get older, dingier, and more insignificant. The spill cups, the unpretentious specimens of crockery ware, the candlesticks, inkstand, swords, singlesticks, boxing gloves, face guards, &c., have but little intrinsic value, but for this miscellaneous collection of old things, which you could almost press into an ordinary clothes basket, there are those who would be glad to give fortunes. The interest which still attaches to the Byron relics might possibly be taken into account in assigning to the dead poet his place in the temple of Fame. The Byron relics occupy but a small space within the walls of Newstead, but they are reckoned among its most precious possessions. Besides those already named, there are "Boatswain's" collar; carved oak chairs, containing embroidery work, by Lord

Byron's sister Augusta, and the rapier which made the fatal puncture in the body of the hapless Mr. Chaworth. A collection of autograph letters and manuscripts, many of them by the poet, may be numbered among the remains, though they are not generally shown. These have been presented to Mrs. Webb at different times, and, as in the case of the deeds of the Abbey, found in the ball of the brass eagle lectern, which was taken from a pond to which this piece of church furniture has given a name, they are most carefully treasured. They are, however, occasionally brought to light, and were produced for the inspection of Prince Leopold, when that Royal Duke visited the Abbey, in 1881.

The abbey was founded in the twelfth century for the accommodation of a set of canons, and attached to it was a good deal of waste territory in Sherwood Forest, in which Newstead stood. The revenues of the monastery increased during successive reigns, and there is every reason to believe that it was in a thriving, and indeed in a highly prosperous condition at the time of its surrender to Henry the Eighth. In 1540 the abbey was granted to Sir John Byron, Knight, Lieutenant of the Forest of Sherwood, and his heirs, who spent money in destroying its monastic appearance, and converting it into a mansion, suited to the requirements of a sixteenth century country gentleman of wealth and title. The grandson of the first lay owner of Newstead was created a peer in 1643, and his descendant was the author of "Childe Harold" and "Manfred." In the poet's lifetime, Newstead, which had been in the possession of his family ever since the reign of the Eighth Henry, which had once sustained a siege, and which had often been the scene of great receptions and of courtly assemblies, passed into other hands. It was here that the foundation of that enduring movement of Fame, which Lord Byron has left for the delectation of after generations was laid; it was within this Nottinghamshire house that some of the happiest hours of his life were spent, and the trifles with which he amused himself, and which were about him during the few short years of his residence in this county, are still preserved among the treasures of what was once his home. His attachment to the halls of his fathers may be gathered from the oft-quoted extract from a letter written to his mother, "Come what may, Newstead and I stand and fall together. I have now lived on the spot, I have fixed my heart upon it, and no pressure, present or future, shall induce me to barter the last vestige of my inheritance. I have that pride within me which will enable me to support difficulties. I can endure privations, but could I exchange Newstead for the first fortune in the country, I would reject the proposition." But, mighty as was the affection for ancestral masonry here disclosed, it was destined to dissolve under the application of a pressing and galling necessity. Three years after Lord Byron had assured his mother that he and

Newstead should stand or fall together, the home of the illustrious house, of which he was the head, was brought to the hammer. A bid of £90,000 was considered insufficient, and Newstead remained unsold until an offer of £140,000 from Mr. Thomas Claughton made it his property. Lord Byron seems afterwards to have regained possession of the estate, which in 1818 was purchased by Colonel Wildman, who was at Harrow with the poet, for £100,000. On the death of Colonel Wildman, Newstead was again in the market, and at the time it was stated that the Prince of Wales was in treaty for the estate. But whether the sum asked for it was too large for even the Royal Exchequer to disburse, in order to secure an occasional residence, or whether questions of situation and convenience exercised the Royal mind, certain it is that Newstead did not become the residence of a Prince of the Blood. In 1860 Mr. William Frederick Webb became the purchaser of Newstead Abbey, which was sold by private contract. Mr. Webb, the intimate friend of the great traveller, the late David Livingstone, and himself a traveller and sportsman, as many a mighty trophy of plain and jungle, distributed through the spacious halls of Newstead, prove, is the son of Mr. Frederick Webb, of Westwick, Durham, and is the owner of Cawton, in Yorkshire, as well as of Newstead Abbey.

Newstead Abbey has had the good fortune to get into the hands of those whose wealth and taste have enabled them to improve the estate, to maintain the house with becoming splendour, and whose liberality has been wide and generous enough to open its portals to the respectable portion of the public. It is said that the late Colonel Wildman spent £300,000 upon the estate, and the improvement instituted by Mr. Webb, must have involved a very considerable expenditure. As to the interior of the house, a day might well be spent in looking over the contents, which, owing to that afore-mentioned liberality, are familiar to large numbers of people. The floor and walls of the grand saloon are loaded with beautiful things—pictures by Vandyck and Kneller, Lely and Lonsdale on the walls ; rare cabinets, enshrining gems of art and vertu, lovely Limoges enamels, a superb Etruscan vase, placed in an oriel window so that the light may bring out its riches of colour ; an ivory chair inlaid with gold, once the property of Warren Hastings ; an inlaid table of Italie work, once the pride of an Italian palace, itself worth the price of an estate ; and numerous other things of beauty are brought within a closer range of vision. In a corridor outside there are the famous Livingstone relics—the explorer's cap and consular sword, with a number of weapons from Central Africa, a collection to which Mr. H. M. Stanley has contributed. A *Wellingtonia* and a *Cedrus Atlantica* planted in the gardens are pleasing, and it is to be hoped lasting memorials of the

visits to Newstead of Livingstone and Stanley, by whose hands they were placed in the soil. There is a room in the abbey—in the Sussex tower, known by the name of the great traveller—a room in which was written that work which has now become a standard one, “The Zambesi and its Tributaries.”

The principal rooms at Newstead, full of interest as they are, need not be described in detail to readers who have been permitted to make themselves familiar with their contents. These are what may be referred to as the historic rooms, which every visitor is allowed to see—rooms in which sovereigns have reposed, rooms that are still haunted by the spirit of the illustrious man of whom Newstead was the cherished home. There is Lord Byron’s bedroom kept undisturbed, with its adjoining dressing room, containing portraits of Joe Murray and of Jackson, the pugilist ; a tapestry room, which was once occupied by Charles the Second ; the Monks’ chamber ; the library ; King Edward the Third’s bedroom ; the Duke of Sussex’s room ; Henry the Seventh’s lodgings ; the great dining room, formerly used as a refectory ; the breakfast room, formerly the Lord Abbot’s parlour. Then there are the famous cloisters and the elegant little chapel, with its exquisite memorial windows. But the proudest apartment of all is the grand saloon, whose walls are covered with the work of the greatest artists of Europe, and whose smooth floor is the resting place of rare and handsome furniture, including many articles of great value and rare interest, among them enamels by Courtois, Penicault, Limonsin, and Raymond ; and cabinets of beautiful and delicate workmanship.

Within the gardens of the abbey there is much to be seen. The beech tree, upon which, in 1814, the poet carved the names of himself and his sister Augusta, was taken down in 1861, when it showed signs of decay, and the piece which bears the precious inscription is carefully preserved among the Byron relics. Boat-swain’s monument, with its sublime epitaph, occupies a familiar spot in the quiet, shady gardens ; the shrubbery known as “the Monks’ Garden” is allowed to flourish undisturbed ; the deep, smooth pond, with its emerald framework, is still fed by springs which are never dry ; the “Devil’s Wood” remains one of the darker glories of the grounds ; and the Stew Pond, shaded by spreading yews of sturdy growth ; the Monks’ Well, with its sweet crystal water ; and the great lake, where Mr. Webb casts his flies, give the charm of water to the grounds. Choice plants and rare flowers are cultivated in stovehouse and conservatory, under the care of a gardener who thoroughly understands his business, and luscious fruits are produced for the table of a house which is noted for the sumptuousness of its hospitality.

Newstead has more than once been the scene of Royal visit. The Prince of Wales is familiar with its halls and pleasaunces ; the Duke of Albany more recently spent a few pleasant hours among its treasures, with the cultivated society Mr. and Mrs. Webb had gathered about them. The privileges which Princes have enjoyed is placed within the reach of the humbler classes, and many are the pilgrimages made to Newstead Abbey. Its fall, if ever such a catastrophe was threatened, has been arrested. In the hands of two owners whose wealth has enabled them to maintain its reputation and to introduce costly improvements it has not suffered. Relics of earlier associations have been tenderly preserved. Decay has not been permitted to mar its proportions or to ruin its walls ; there is no "fall" for poet to lament in touching strains, and the "blasts of fate" to which it is submitted are light as a summer wind. Newstead is a great house of solid masonry. Order prevails alike within its walls and without, and it belongs to an owner who has done much towards making it what it is.

NORWOOD PARK.

IN one of the most elevated parts of the beautiful park of Norwood, a mile or so away from the venerable towers of Southwell Collegiate Church, there is a prostrate oak, the decaying remnant of a tree of vast proportions, which was once a very giant amongst the sturdy brotherhood of oaks that have flourished in the Norwood domain for generations. What remains of it is called to this day "Cludd's Oak." The tree has been cut in sections, a long while ago, for a reason which does not appear obvious, and to-day it lies in knarled and aged pieces amid the flowers of May and the luxuriant undergrowth of a picturesque plantation. This piece of fallen timber, whose only visible claim upon the attention of the wanderer among the Norwood plantations, is that doubtful one which comes of age and decay, remains to remind one of a custom which was observed in the district two hundred and fifty years ago, and is in a measure associated with the history of the house which I visited in the spring of 1881. In the early part of the seventeenth century there lived at Southwell, a certain Mr. Edward Cludd, who had considerable influence in the neighbourhood. This gentleman is supposed to have been descended from the Cludds of Shropshire, and at one time he is said to have been possessed of a small property at Arnold, near Nottingham. He was concerned in the civil war which took place between King Charles and his Parliament, and he threw what influence and zeal he had into the Parliamentary cause, his course of action being dictated, it is recorded, not because he was an enemy to monarchical supremacy, but because he was a strenuous opponent of the government administered by the king. There is no necessity to invent an excuse for the introduction of this gentleman's name into this article, because not only did Mr. Cludd own Norwood, but he was in his time the principal adviser of all measures taken by Parliament in the district in which he lived, and "was the person by whose invitation and under whose protection the commissioners of Scotland resided, and held their consultations in the Archiepiscopal Palace of Southwell"—whose servant once told an enquiring friend, "that he and his master (Cludd) ruled all Nottinghamshire." This, of course, was a ridiculous exaggeration of Cludd's authority, but that the then owner and occupier of Norwood Park was a man of considerable power in the State, there can be no doubt, and perhaps

those who admire the grand old Minster at Southwell are not generally aware, that but for the influence of this man, that famous pile would not have existed to give celebrity to a county which cannot boast too many great buildings, to charm the antiquary, to delight every lover of the beautiful, and to provide an excuse for the establishment of a new episcopal see. Cromwell would have demolished Southwell if it had not been for Mr. Cludd, afterwards of Norwood Park, who had great influence with the stern Protector, and who procured a revocation of the warrant that had already been issued for the demolition of the Minster. It was not until after the alienation of the episcopal and Church lands that Mr. Cludd became the purchaser of Norwood Park. Here he built a lordly pleasure house, whose hospitable doors were thrown open for the reception of guests who could entertain him with their wit and pleasant small talk, and also for the entertainment of those who needed a larger supply of the good things of this life. That he was a man of considerable wealth is tolerably certain, for a conveyance, dated 1646, states that he became the purchaser of the Bishop's Palace in Southwell, New Park, and Hexgrave Park, in the bishopric of York, for one thousand six hundred and sixty-six pounds, seven shillings, and threepence halfpenny—the last-named coin presumably representing the fittings of the palace. Being a Justice of the Peace and a Knight of the Shire for the county of Nottingham in the Protector's Parliament, Mr. Cludd did not lead an idle life, and in summer time he must have often led a pleasant one, as his duties often took him to the cool shade of that magnificent oak whose lifeless trunk now lies slowly rotting among the flowers which grow in the Norwood plantations at the present time. At the time to which I refer, marriages were solemnised by the civil magistrate, and "Mr. Justice Cludd became very famous for the numberless rites of this kind which were celebrated by his authority under a remarkable oak in Norwood Park." Such is the history of "Cludd's Oak," as it is called to this day, and round its prostrate bole the flowers of the woods will blossom for many years to come, unless some future owner regards it simply as a piece of fallen timber that needs carting away.

After the Restoration, Norwood Park became the property of the Archbishop of York, and at various times there have been grants of timber from its well-wooded enclosure for the support of the Church and other purposes. Norwood Park has always been famous for its timber. A number of remarkably fine oak trees, equal in size and in shape to any to be met with amid the vast collection of Sherwood Forest, give it a picturesqueness and a charm which cannot be met with in most modern parks, and then there are elms and beeches and other trees of noble proportions. In a park which extends over more than a hundred acres there is room for some

big trees, and Norwood has the advantage of these. The sylvan arrangements are, indeed, very fine, the views to be obtained from various parts of the park are excellent, and not the least pleasing of them is that glimpse of the spires of the Minster, which appear over the tops of the trees as you stand on the steps in front of the hall. Norwood Park has always been a delightful residence. The luxurious Archbishops of York, who could enjoy pleasant prospects and delightful natural surroundings, as well as sumptuous feasts and brilliant society, were happy in its retirement, and since then two handsome houses have been built within its domain by successive lessees, one of them that erected by Mr. Cludd. Towards the end of the seventeenth century the Residence House at Southwell was built in a great measure out of the profits arising from a sale of timber in Norwood Park, directed by the then Archbishop of York for the purposes of the Chapter. In the beginning of the present century the estate was in the possession of Mr. William Burton, who sold the lease of it, in 1731, to Mr. Edward Becher, from whom it was purchased, in 1747, by Sir Samuel Gordon, Bart. It was purchased, in 1764, by Mr. John Sutton, who built the mansion which stands in Norwood Park at the present time. Mr. John Sutton dying intestate, the family estates descended to Sir Richard Sutton, who, in 1778, procured an Act of Parliament, enabling him to exchange certain lands contiguous to the town of Southwell with the See of York, for Norwood Park. This member of the Sutton family, who owned large estates in Nottinghamshire, was one of the Lords of the Treasury during Lord North's Administration, and was created a baronet, in 1772. He died at Bath, in 1802. By the means just mentioned the family estates became freehold, and the Norwood portion of them remained in the possession of the Suttons, until it was purchased by Mr. J. E. F. Chambers, J.P. In the meantime the hall has had a succession of tenants. It was once the residence of the Marquis of Carmarthen (the present Duke of Leeds), of Lord Edwin Hill, of Mr. Dashwood Fane, and, in 1881, it was sold by auction, and purchased by Mr. Starkey, a Yorkshire gentleman.

The mansion is of red brick, and its spacious front has caught that agreeable tint—that subdued ruddy tone which gathers upon good brickwork in the course of years in districts that are free from the soiling influence of smoke and other elements which mix with the air of towns. The house is three storeys in height, with entrance hall, staircase, and five reception rooms on the ground floor ; on the first and second floors are fourteen bed and dressing rooms, and the two wings contain the servants' offices and store rooms. Since the hall was built, considerably more than a hundred years ago, few, if any, alterations have been made either to increase its accommodation or to alter its proportions. It was, at the time of its completion, as it is now, one of the great houses of

the county and the distinguished and wealthy tenants who, since it ceased to be the residence of the Sutton family, the head of which, the present baronet, has settled in a handsome house in Berkshire, have placed elegant furniture in its spacious rooms, and fine pictures on its accommodating walls, have found it sufficient for their requirements, and have lived contentedly in the enjoyment of those pleasures which make the life of an English country gentleman an enviable one. Mr. Chambers purchased Norwood when it was put up for sale some years ago, and became possessed of a residence, which, under less advantageous circumstances than those which obtain at the present time, was a centre of archiepiscopal hospitality, and the scene of those dignified orgies, at which in olden times the heads of the Church militant sometimes presided, gathering round them the intelligence and wealth of the district in which they had their residence. The late owner of Norwood is descended from a Yorkshire family, who at one time held Compton, in the parish of Collingham, from Kirkstall Abbey, and who, at a later date, have been settled at The Hurst, in the neighbouring county of Derby. A near relative of Mr. Chambers' possession is a letter written by his Grace to that gentleman, which has a local interest, inasmuch as it relates to the Nottingham Castle, and to a charity fund then existing in the town, in which the Pelham-Clintons have such a considerable interest. The letter was written at Clumber, in 1830, and in it the Duke says, "After all that has been done at the Castle, I could not let it for less than was paid by the last tenants. It is a charming place for anyone, and ought to let for at least £150 for the half." The latter part of the letter refers to "the charity fund at Nottingham," to which the noble writer requests Mr. Chambers to raise his subscription from £25 to £50, "considering the property which I possess in Nottingham, and that being free from rates." This letter is preserved, together with others from the same author, and among such of the documents relating to the family as are in the possession of Mr. Chambers.

In his rooms Mr. Chambers had a good collection of topographical histories, and a small assortment of books of natural history and learned literature. The walls of the drawing room, which is entered from the hall, contained some very interesting modern pictures. Mr. Chambers' collection comprised a set of nine excellent examples of David Cox's lovely art. Some of them are the unfinished sketches of the master watercolourist—unlike the incomplete work of any other artist. If you look at them they are full of transparency and life ; with a few touches the painter has produced a picture truthful to nature and faithful to art. The more finished of the nine are as good specimens of the rare powers of David Cox as I have seen anywhere, and the collection is enriched by a very fine specimen of De Wint's beautiful colouring and accurate drawing

—Kirkstall Abbey. In the drawing room there were two fine Venetian sketches in oil, by Mr. Keeley Halswelle, with whose bright and picturesque style visitors to the Academy are familiar ; and a characteristic piece or work by Cattermole—Cellini valuing one of his works at the request of a party of brigands. There was in the same apartment a landscape by Sidney Cooper, and over the mantel-piece an intelligent portrait, by Sant, of Mr. Chambers' sister. Two cabinets at one end of the room were filled with china, amongst which collection are several pieces of Pinxton ware, which have a certain local interest attaching to them. In the dining room there is an old-fashioned wall-paper, which has adorned the walls for a considerable time, and which does not seem to have suffered. The pattern is a somewhat curious combination of curves and colour, but it is pretty and light, and it certainly ought to be preserved, if modern ideas of decoration can be made to pale in the presence of the antique and the curious. The pictures in this room were chiefly portraits—one of them, by Wright, of Derby, of a John Whitehouse, F.S.A., of that town, who wrote a work on the stratification of the earth ; another is of a Dean of the Irish Church, who was at one time rector of Pleasley, in this neighbourhood, and was connected with the Chambers family. The two sea pieces that were in this room were by Carter ; the other paintings were family portraits, one of a gentleman in shooting costume, with dogs and gun ; the other of a person in uniform. The views from out the windows of these rooms—windows for the privilege of enjoying which, I am told, a former tenant had to pay a large sum of money annually in taxation—embrace beautiful glimpses of the park and grounds. In grassy hollow, and upon gentle swell, there are masses of tender foliage, the grand old oaks, holding rank as the monarchs of the park, their juices still circulating, after centuries of exposure to sunshine and storm, their branches still wide enough to cover such ceremonies as were performed under their prostrate brother yonder, three centuries ago, and the foliage still dense enough to shelter a hunted king. Under glass, within the kitchen garden enclosure, the grape, the nectarine, and the peach, are cultivated in large quantities, and on each side of one of the broad gravel walks, within the substantial brick walls which enclose the garden space, there is a growth of old-fashioned flowers, which fill the air with the scent of innumerable cottage gardens, and charm the eye with variety of familiar colour.

NUTTALL TEMPLE.

NUTTALL Temple has never been a show house, but it is celebrated throughout the country no less on account of the beauty of some of its internal features than of the estate of its owners, who have not only been men of affluence and position, but whose names have been identified with the history of the country in comparatively recent times. In the latter part of the last century this elegant mansion, with its lofty dome, the interior of which is beautified by the handiwork of Italian artists, who have copied with consummate skill the superb art of the villa Capra, was the principal residence of a family whose title has become extinct, and whose name is hardly remembered in these days—I mean the Sedleys. The last of these baronets, Sir Charles Sedley, died at Nuttall Temple, in August of 1778, at a comparatively early age, leaving his property, or at any rate the most important portion of it, which embraced the Nuttall estate, to his daughter, who had married a son of Lord Vernon. On the acquisition of this fortune, Mr. Vernon does not seem to have exhibited any reluctance to change his name to Sedley, and so the old family was perpetuated for another generation, in name at any rate, though with different titular honours. For the Sedleys were a very old family. Long before they were known in Nottinghamshire they had considerable estates in Kent, and were territorial magnates in the garden of England. In the south, traces of them have been found as far back as the middle of the fourteenth century, a circumstance, which, apart from the connection of the family with this county and their residence in this house, about which I shall have to say something presently, may well warrant the revival of a dead name, if not of an extinct title. In the ninth year of James the Fifth's reign, William Sedley, founder of the Sedleian lectures at Oxford, was created a baronet, perhaps more as a reward for scholarly attainments than for political services, for this was a studious family, with plenty of brains and abundance of energy. One of them was a by no means unpopular poet, and it is on record that Charles the Second was partial to the society of this clever man. But the successful versemaker sacrificed his immortality to the tastes of a sensual court; he employed his Muse in the service of corruption, and his name perished. Sir Charles Sedley, of Nuttall Temple, the last of the baronets, was the best known member of the family in the town

and county. Like his ancestors, he was a man of learning and erudition, and was a Doctor of Civil Law of the University of Oxford, but he was also a political figure of some importance, and a most influential patron of the turf. He was elected member of Parliament for Nottingham, in 1747, and was re-elected in the following year. After enjoying an interval of retirement from public life, he again successfully sought the suffrages of the electors of Nottingham at the general election of 1774, having four years earlier been appointed Ranger and Keeper of his Majesty's Chase for Nottinghamshire, an appointment which was in every way congenial to his English taste, and possibly somewhat remunerative. The Nuttall estate, as well as the manors of Hayford and Harleigh, came into the Sedley family by marriage ; it came into that of the Holdens, who have had it for three generations, by purchase. The Rev. Alexander Atkinson Holden, M.A., the present owner of Nuttall, is the third of five brothers, of whom the second was his predecessor, the late Colonel Robert Holden, and the youngest, Captain Henry Holden, Chief-Constable of Nottinghamshire. These represent the younger branch of the Holdens, of Ashton, in Derbyshire, a family at one time among the most influential of that county. Mr. Robert Holden, of Darley Abbey, and of Nuttall Temple, married an heiress of the Drury-Lowe family, and by ties of relationship the Holdens are connected with some of the best houses in Derbyshire.

The memory of the late Colonel Holden, whose death took place some ten years ago, will not readily be effaced. The latter portion of his life he devoted to good works, which were not confined to his own village and to his own people, nor was the flow of his sympathies checked by any narrow prejudices. To this day his kindnesses are spoken of in the village, where he lived for so many years, and his name will live among the promoters of societies for the spread of Christianity and religion. One of the rooms at Nuttall Temple was the centre of a system of private outdoor relief, which the kind-hearted Squire himself inaugurated and kept up. To this room the poor came for materials to make clothing and not unfrequently these gifts were supplemented by articles of food in needy cases. With the death of Colonel Holden I am told that the system dropped through, but its author is not forgotten by those to whom it was extended. If Colonel Holden had had a family to assist him in the enjoyment of the charming estate, which was all his own, it is possible that the bounds of his liberality might have been more circumscribed, though that is a matter into which we cannot well enter. We must speak of things as we find them, and all that can be said of Colonel Holden is that he was a man at once liberal and tender-hearted, doing good after his own fashion, and that a laudable one, and

ever anxious for the spiritual welfare of his fellow-men. That the late Colonel Holden was a man of considerable taste in art matters is manifest when one sees the purchases that he made in the way of pictures and other ornaments.

Nuttall Temple is a treasure house of pictorial art. In the drawing room, in the dining room, in the billiard room, and in the library there are pictures, many of them by masters, and most of them interesting. In the library, above the well-stocked book shelves, is ranged a collection of portraits, all of them of personages of note, not one of whom I am enabled to name. There are courtiers and philosophers—men from whose features, traced by a master hand, there are beams of intellectual power ; there are men of firm lip and daring eye. who would face death in the cause of the right, and there are men who would ornament a court. But they are a collection of the unknown. Their owner does not know them, though he may be perfectly familiar with the history of the times in which their originals lived. All that I can say about them is that they are a silent collection of celebrities, who have been famous or notorious in various walks of life, and that they were purchased by the late Colonel Holden. In one of the other rooms is a famous picture by Wright—who had so many patrons in this county—"The Captive" ; there is also superb representation of a beggar boy, which is ascribed to Murillo, and the portrait of an old lady by Rembrandt. The massive features of Charles James Fox, and beneath them a figure in a well-fitting costume, form one of the pictures in the Nuttall collection, and there are three family portraits which are interesting because they are those of three gentlemen, whose names are well known in this county. These are in the dining room, and they represent one of the Lords Middleton, Mr. Whetham (of Kirklington), and a Mr. Holden. These three were on very friendly terms, and they are associated together, though in separate frames, on the walls at Nuttall. In the billiard room are several good landscapes, including one by Turner, which would delight the eye of Mr. Ruskin, containing, as it does, some of the best characteristics of that great painter, but about the remainder of the collection I was unable to learn anything. Everybody that goes to Nuttall is struck with the magnificence of the cupola which springs from the entrance hall, and which serves to light that handsome apartment. It is indeed singularly beautiful, not only on account of its airy loftiness, but because of the exquisite shapes and figures in bas relief with which its walls are adorned. These are in white plaster, and were the work of chosen Italian artists. The hall beneath is octagonal in shape, and its pillars support a light gallery, which brings one face to face with the beautiful work on the walls. At two places in Kent, and nowhere else, there are copies of the original rotunda of Palladio, which Nuttall

Temple represents. It is the dome which gives a temple-like appearance to this fine house at Nuttall, that, sheltered and hidden as it is by fine trees, and kept private by a broad expanse of park land, is not much known to the public. The entrance is approached by an elegant flight of steps, on the summit of which is a portico, supported by doric columns, and overlooking a park, in which there is some good timber. A large sheet of water of picturesque formation improves the appearance of the estate in the immediate neighbourhood of the house, affords a home for water fowl, and provides sport for those of the family who care for pond fishing.

OSBERTON.

MANDERING about the sumptuous pleasure grounds and gardens of a great house like Osberton, where some thirty or forty acres of land, set apart to serve these purposes, are kept in the most faultless order, one unconsciously experiences a sense of territorial consequence, which is pleasant enough while it lasts. Mr. Foljambe's gardens are amongst the finest in the county. There are velvet stretches of lawn of the greenest hue, watered by a lake, which is narrowed into intersecting strips of silver. It is the home of the swan and the coot, and of wild fowl, which inhabit its remoter reaches. There are shady trees, Scotch firs, the tallest and sturdiest of their species, and some of them dip to the waters of the lake; Australian pines, with their upward-pointing leaf spikes, and there is the spreading plumage of the *cedrus deodara*, which grows here in far-spreading luxuriance. There are beds of bright flowers, and when they are in bloom the air is filled with perfume. Mr. Foljambe's horticultural theory is akin to that of Lady Corisande; his gardens are sweet and luxuriant, and not mere hard and scentless works of art. There is within the Osberton pleasure grounds a little garden, whose box-lined mazes suggest the idea of a large puzzle. Its geometric beds are sacred to one species of flower, the heliotrope. It is a common flower certainly, but its simple purple blossoms enshrine an odour richer than that which more pretentious scent-bearers can disperse. In his last years the late Mr. Foljambe was deprived of sight, and he loved the scent of the flowers which he could not see. His successor has inherited this taste for sweet-smelling flowers, and the gardens of Osberton are always redolent of perfume. There are abundant patches of heliotrope and mignonette, and the sweet-scented stock in the open air; in the conservatories the subtler perfume of exotics is prevalent. Near the heliotrope garden there is a fernery, where the violet berries of the barberry mingle with the long fronds of the ferns—a delicious retreat on a hot day. There are abundant growths of clematis, whose flowers look like clusters of beautiful purple-winged butterflies. The people who go to the handsome Norman church within the pleasure grounds, which was built by Mr. F. F. Foljambe, in 1833, have to traverse a broad, straight gravel walk. The grass on either side is beautifully kept, and planted at corresponding distance with the tall and delicate shapes of the *humea elegans*, which, in their scarlet

feathery gracefulness, look like lines of phantom soldiers. There is a stained glass window at the eastern end of the church, in which are coloured the arms of the family, with their heraldic devices. The crest of the Foljambes affords an heraldic study. The calopus, or *chatloup*, passant, granted to Sir Godfrey Foljambe, 1513, and modelled in enduring oak in one of the principal rooms in the house is one of those chimerical figures of heraldry as to the origin and meaning of which I have no information. The calopus is not an elegant beast, and does not appear to have been adopted by Sir Godfrey's descendants. In the lawnlike turf of the sacred enclosure a beautiful cross of white marble is implanted, marked with the letters G.F.S.F., and the first four lines of an exquisite hymn that is sometimes sung in our churches. The grave is most carefully tended, and the trees and flowers with which it is planted are never allowed to languish. Under extensive ranges of glass in kitchen gardens there are abundant growths of pines, peaches, and grapes, in various stages of development, and the pomiferum or red guava, and the Cape gooseberry, in its quaint pod, are successfully cultivated.

For about two years Osberton Hall has been in the hands of the builders. It is some seventy years ago since Osberton underwent any material alteration, and now it has been enlarged to suit modern requirements, and in such a manner that some of its original features have been destroyed. It is a large house with a vast front of unbroken red cement, which, undimmed as yet by time, gives it the appearance of a very modern mansion. Its portico of Ionic columns has been pulled down to be replaced by a structure of a more convenient character composed of Roche Abbey stone ; the terrace has been taken further out, and the approaches to the house, which commands a sweep of fine sylvan scenery, are being altered and improved. A new wing has been added at the north-west front, comprising a dining room, a library of spacious dimensions, and other apartments. The old library, with its pleasant outlook across the park, is already converted into a billiard room. From the tall windows of the new library, with its handsome oak cornices and fittings, you overlook a broad sweep of park land, and the trees are not tall enough to hide the pediments surmounting the church tower. On the site of the old drawing room has been built a magnificent saloon, or central hall, the most sumptuous apartment in the whole house. It is lighted by domelike arrangements in the roof ; a broad massive staircase of oak leads to its gallery where the family pictures are hung. This splendid apartment with its Ionic columns, oak pilasters, and carved oak chimney-piece, is called the museum. It contains a perfect collection of British birds, which has been arranged by Mr. Shaw, of Shrewsbury, in their new glass cases on the ground floor. This superb collection—I believe it is the

most complete one existing of British birds—was commenced by Mr. F. F. Foljambe, an intimate friend of Mr. Montague, the eminent ornithologist, and great grandfather of the present owner. Most of the earlier specimens were set up by Mr. Corbett, a London naturalist of some repute, and he was succeeded in the curatorship by Reid, of Doncaster, and Graham, of York. The collection contains, amongst many rare specimens, one of the great auk—the *alca impennis*, which has in former time been met with on the northern shores of Great Britain, and the red-breasted goose so seldom seen. The specimens are in beautiful plumage and excellent preservation the greatest care having been bestowed upon them. Amongst the other curiosities which are to have a place in the museum, are part of the altar piece of Beauchief Abbey, representing the death of Thomas a Becket—supposed to have been erected soon after the occurrence in atonement for the foul deed; a signet ring that belonged to the Abbot of Roche Abbey; an old Roman collar, found at Littleborough, which was formerly a Roman station, and entomological, zoological, and geological specimens, old coins, and weapons from the South Sea Islands. In the gallery of the saloon the painter's art tells a portion of the family history. The owner of Osberton can trace his lineage as far back as Sir Thomas Foljambe, of Derbyshire, who lived in the reigns of Henry III. and Edward I., and was bailiff of the High Peak, in 1272. A later ancestor was created a baronet, in 1622, and at his death the baronetcy expired. Francis Ferrard Moore, M.P., for the county of York, sometime about 1780 took the surname of Foljambe, and by marriage the family became associated with the Thornhaughs, who originally held Osberton, the Saviles, of Rufford, and later with several of the noble houses of the realm. Among the family portraits there is one representing Colonel Francis Thornagh (at one time M.P. for Retford) in a suit of armour, who was killed at Preston during the Civil War, and a full-length of Sir George Savile. There is Mr. F. F. Foljambe, of Aldwark, who married the heiress of John Thornagh, of Osberton and Fenton, for forty years, M.P. for Notts. The Lady Scarborough of a past generation, the younger sister of Sir J. Saville, has been treated by the master hand of Sir Joshua Reynolds, and the other portraits are of Bridget Lady Thornagh, Sir Godfrey Foljambe, of Walton, who was High Sheriff of Derbyshire in his day; the late Mr. G. S. Foljambe and his wife, and his wife, and the present owner when a child, by Partridge. There are two very fine sporting pictures, which serve to indicate the tastes of the wealthy owners of Osberton. The one is a shooting picture, with the famous Clumber spaniels, and portraits of Mr. G. S. Foljambe and Sir William Milner, and a painting of the meet of the late Mr. Foljambe's hounds at Grove, with portraits of the late Duke of Portland, the late Lords George Bentinck and Henry Bentinck, Lord Galway, Mr. Bridgman-Simpson,

and others. This collection comprises landscapes by Ruysdael, Van Ostade, Claude Lorraine, and others, interiors by Teniers, a sketch by Rubens, and other valuable works of pictorial art.

Mr. Francis John Savile Foljambe, M.P., for the Hundred of Bassetlaw since 1857, and a magistrate for Notts. and for the West Riding of Yorkshire, is the owner of some 10,000 acres of land in Nottinghamshire, and of 5,368 acres of valuable territory in the West Riding, and this does not represent the whole of his landed possessions. He has his residences in both counties—Osberton and Aldwark—and a pretty hunting-box and Monks' Tower, near Lincoln. He is an ardent sportsman, tall, broad-shouldered, and clean of limb ; in politics a moderate Liberal, a man of refined taste and established culture, who is not above taking a pride in his herd of short-horns, and an interest in the operations of his farm, which, during his residence at Osberton, he visits regularly. The Foljambes have always been famous sportsmen—they belong to a race of Englishmen. The late Mr. Foljambe bred a pack of hounds, one of the most famous in the county, which he subsequently sold to the late Lord Galway. In 1871 Mr. Frank Foljambe assumed the mastership of the Burton Hounds, which, though a Lincolnshire pack, had been under Nottinghamshire masters since 1822, except during the periods it was led by Mr. Chaplin and Lord Doneraile. At the close of a recent season Mr. Foljambe, after leading the Burton Chase for about ten years, determined to retire from the mastership, a decision which was received with regret by all those who had been associated with him in the field. The Osberton short-horns are known wherever great shows are held. Numerous are the prizes which have been won from time to time by the pick of this herd, which is quartered at the Scrofton farm, not ten minutes' walk from the house.

OXTON HALL.

BETWEEN Nottingham and Southwell, though nearer the last-named place, stands the village of Oxton, in a sufficiently pleasant situation. In 1861 it is said to have numbered 184 houses and 738 inhabitants, and since that time neither population, house accommodation, nor rateable value have increased to any very material extent. Perhaps after the church and the hall, a new and commodious set of schools, which were completed in 1870, form the most important building. Like the church and the hall, they are in the heart of the village, and in tolerably close contiguity to the vicarage, a comfortable looking house, which stands out some little distance from the road in such dazzling whiteness that the eye is almost glad to find relief in the green of surrounding shrubs and trees. We may take it that curiosity marked the standard of appreciativeness in such of our ancestors who professed a fondness for the country, for the local historian of a century ago informs his readers that Oxton was only relieved from the utter absence of the curious by the perennial appearance on the church tower of an uncommon species of fern. I believe there are now no traces of the plant; it has languished on its ecclesiastical nutriment, and the species has probably become extinct in this part of the country. The church, though an ancient edifice, shows scarcely any of the ordinary signs of age. Its walls are uncorroded by decay, and its interior presents a cheerful appearance, and is in a good state of repair. To reach the chancel you step over a worn stone, whose inscription, still perfectly legible, tells that one of the Savile family was buried there two centuries ago. There are at this east end two plain tablets placed there to perpetuate the memory of the former lord of the Manor and his lady, and in various parts of the church there are coats of arms belonging to the leading family, and a hatchment with the Royal arms, so rarely seen in churches now. In one of the window recesses there is a recumbent figure in stone. It has probably been put there to be out of the way—out of sight of the congregation on account of its lack of beauty. Time and rough handling have combined to obliterate the features, and it is not a handsome piece of sculpture now. Every village has a history more or less interesting, more or less veracious. Oxton, at one time, was within the forest of Sherwood, but when the “great perambulation” was made in the reign of Henry the Second it was left out, and as in those days public rights and ancient precedent were perhaps of

less importance than was the due preservation of the King's deer, the inhabitants of Oxton remained commonless until the reign of Edward the Third.

Oxton Hall cannot well be described as a very ancient mansion. It is not, however, a creation of yesterday, as its somewhat embrowned exterior will testify. The house has been enlarged by the present owner in a manner which has had the two-fold effect of increasing its accommodation and improving its appearance. The hall is on a level with the main road of the village, between which and the entrance an expanse of garden thickly studded with shrubs intervenes, and this is separated from the roadway by a stretch of stone palisading. But it is only one portion of the house that can be seen from the village. The large, bold bay-windows of the front are faced by a broad expanse of undulating park land, and by a lake, which has been made by checking the course of a small stream, and upon whose surface float graceful swans and gay-coloured waterfowl. If Oxton Hall is not pretentious, its external appearance suggests not only comfort within, but that elegance and luxury which one expects to find in the home of a country gentleman of Mr. Henry Sherbrooke's position. If Mr. Sherbrooke is not at home you may be pretty sure that he is engaged at Nottingham, at Southwell, or some other part of the county upon business of a public character. If your visit should happen in the hunting season it is just possible that the master of Oxton may be afield in scarlet and leathers, for there are few more ardent lovers of the chase in this country than Mr. Sherbrooke. There are foxes in the neighbourhood of Oxton, and their depredations prevent an increase to the numbers of the rare feathered occupants of the lake, but Mr. Sherbrooke would rather sacrifice his ducks than destroy his foxes, and Reynard carries away his prey without fear of molestation. At an age when most other men are past active service and outdoor pursuits, Mr. Sherbrooke displays an energy and a capacity for work which would put many younger men to shame. He is regular and assiduous in the discharge of his magisterial functions; he is to be found at Southwell when there is any work to be done in connection with the administration of the Poor Law. He takes an active part in the management of several of the charitable and benevolent institutions of Nottingham, and he is at the present time one of the most useful men in the whole county. There are few people in this part of the country I think, who have not at some time or another, seen Mr. Henry Sherbrooke. His fine presence and dignified bearing are familiar to most of us. Though he has passed the "allotted span," there is no sign of decrepitude, in the firm elastic tread, the square shoulders, and the upright and graceful figure of the owner of Oxton, the elder brother by one year of the Lord Sherbrooke, Ex-Chancellor of the Exchequer, a Privy Councillor, and one of the most accomplished scholars of the day. Mr. Sherbrooke is fond of being out of doors, as the bronzed

healthy glow upon the cheeks plainly indicates, further confirmatory evidence of this being contributed by thick boots and a stick which is certainly not used for ornament. But Mr. Sherbrooke has evidently been at work indoors this morning. The glass door of his study, or business room, is open, letting in a flood of morning sunlight and of soft spring air. Another glass door in this room opens into the conservatory, which now is full of bright azalias, flowering creepers, and other plants. A large account book lies open on a desk near the window, and on the table are a number of letters, which the morning's post has brought, and most of which have been opened. The general appearance of the room bespeaks its occupant to be a man of order and method. There are a few books in the room, such as are useful for business purposes, and on the walls are hung several portraits, amongst them two of the ex-Minister, Lord Sherbrooke, bearing some likeness to the elder brother. There are also small portraits of the late Lord Galway, who is more faithfully represented in another part of the house; of the Lord Hastings of 1841, and of other friends of the family. There is an antique fireplace faced with oak in the entrance hall—oak which may have been taken from Sherwood Forest. To the left of this are carefully preserved a number of Oriental arms and accoutrements, the brightness of which has been somewhat dimmed by age. These, carefully arranged on the wall, are said to have been the spoils of Sir John Sherbrooke, long dead, a distinguished warrior, who wore the star of the grand order of the Bath. There is amongst them the once superb trappings of a horse, which with the weapons, was taken by Sir John from Tipoo Sahib at the siege of Seringapatam, a fortress which was three times besieged by the British in the closing decade of the last century. Sir John Sherbrooke was afterwards made Governor of Canada. I have noticed in many of the great houses of Nottinghamshire some token of the days of outlawry—objects which are pointed out as having belonged to that personage who is said to have killed the King's deer in open violation of the Royal mandate, and to have plundered decent, quiet people on his Majesty's highway with transcendant coolness—I mean Robin Hood. In the hall at Oxton Hall there are two ancient cross-bows, which may or may not have belonged to that good-humoured scoundrel, and there are also preserved there the heads of a pair of red deer—the last, it is said, that were killed among the bracken of merrie Sherwood. There are also on the same walls one or two excellent engravings of animals taken from pictures by Mr. Carter, who not long ago completed two excellent portraits of Mr. and Mrs. Chaworth Musters, of Annesley. The drawing room is the handsomest room in the house, both as regards its proportions and its fittings. It has lofty windows, commanding a clear, uninterrupted view of the gardens and the park beyond.

The garden terminates in a road which runs between two

rows of slender iron fencing. On one side are the gardens and grounds, on the other the park, which, not many years ago, was arable land of a not very fertile description. The whole of this fine open piece of land, extending over about 175 acres, has been grassed by the present owner, and, seen from the drawing room windows, it has the appearance of a beautiful park. The walls of the drawing room are rather extensively hung with bright modern paintings, one or two of which are the work of Mrs. Sherbrooke's sister. The dining room is also a large room, plainly and substantially furnished. Here there are some family portraits. Over the mantel-piece there is a grave-looking gentleman of a century and a half ago, dressed in a courtly garb—a loose coat embroidered with gold, and a long judicial-looking wig—supposed to be the High Sheriff of that day. To the right of this is Sir John Sherbrooke, to whom allusion has already been made, in scarlet uniform, and there are in the room several other family portraits, including one of the present Mr. Sherbrooke, evidently painted some years ago, and one of his predecessor. A tall, quaint, old-fashioned screen worked on leather, and evidently of foreign origin, stands on one side of the fireplace. The library contains an extensive collection of books, arranged with the most perfect order and regularity. Some of them are very rare, and there are a few old and valuable missals, an investigation of which would be interesting. Oxtan may, indeed, be described as famous for its library, where one is very much tempted to linger. The gardens attached to the hall are pleasant, well arranged, and well ordered. The sturdy shrubs with which they abound, impart a comfortable English look to the gardens. The grounds are intersected by a broad gravel walk and they terminate at the margin of a spacious lake, which glistens in the mid-day sunshine. A high brick wall encloses an ample kitchen garden, or rather kitchen gardens, for this portion of the grounds is divided into parts. At one time the ground here was occupied by a second mansion, the only remaining trace of which is to be seen in the grim, unromantic outline of a tall water pump, flanked, by a huge stone trough of some antiquity. At the other end of the grounds there is a road deeply sunk—the road leading to Southwell, excavated a long time ago, and Mr. Sherbooke's inability to understand what was done with the amount of material that was taken out of it in the course of making is a pardonable piece of perplexity. Mr. Sherbrooke, who was born in 1810, is the oldest son of the late Rev. Robert Lowe, rector of Bingham. He took the name of Sherbrooke on succeeding his cousin in 1847. He was educated at Eton, and at Trinity Hall, Cambridge, where he graduated B. A., in 1832. He is a magistrate and deputy-lieutenant of the county, and deputy-chairman of Quarter Sessions, and was High Sheriff in 1859. His family became possessed of Oxtan in the reign of Queen Elizabeth,

PAPPLEWICK HALL AND A POLITICAL RETROSPECT.

IN the burial ground belonging to Papplewick Church there is a grand, sombre yew, and just beyond the spread of its sheltering branches is to be observed a tomb of more pretension than the rest of the graves, which are chiefly marked by such humble memorials as one is accustomed to see in a country churchyard. The lettering upon the stone informs us that eighty years ago the remains of the Right Honourable Frederick Montagu were consigned to their last resting place. In 1787 Mr. Montagu built Papplewick Hall, and, for some thirteen years, chiefly lived there when he was not occupied in the service of his country. Mr. Frederick Montagu was a man of some consequence. He was appointed a Lord of the Treasury, in 1782, when Lord Rockingham was at the head of the Government, and again, in 1783, he held office under the Duke of Portland, though only for a short time. The Papplewick estate still forms part of the very large property belonging of the Montagus, who own some 3,300 acres of land in this county. In the quiet church at Papplewick, standing in an isolated position amongst the trees of the park, there are mural monuments, which serve to remind one of the former connection of the Montagus with this county. There is one to the memory of Lady Wearg, daughter of Lord Chief Baron Montagu, grandson of the first Earl of Manchester, a nobleman, whose family has since been raised in the peerage; and another to Charles, only son of the judge. Papplewick Church is not a shrine to which many pilgrimages are made, and the numbers who have not read the tablets on its walls will hardly know that the family to whom they refer once exercised a not unimportant influence in this county, it is so long since they resided here. Papplewick Hall has been occupied by three different tenants since the death of the minister. It has always been a desirable residence. It is beautifully situated, and its apartments are large, lofty, and well-arranged. For more than twenty years it has been the residence of Mr. Henry Fraser Walter, who, during his long tenancy, has made certain improvements, and has kept the estate in admirable order.

Mr. Walter belongs to a family, which for a long time was associated with the political history of the county town, and no apology is needed for introducing him into this series of articles. He is a brother of one whom the late Mortimer Collins described as a "Prince of the Press." It must have been the owner of Bearwood, and the principal proprietor of the greatest and most influential newspaper in the world, of whom Mr. Collins wrote, "This week I visited the Palace of a Prince of the Press. You may see the splendid, stately house miles away, as you may feel on the other side of the world the influence of the famous newspaper that built it." The Berkshire estate was purchased by Mr. Walter's father, and the noble mansion, which is called Bearwood, was built by him. Mr. H. F. Walter, of Papplewick, is the second of three brothers, the other two being Mr. John Walter, who has represented Berkshire in Parliament since 1859, and Mr. Edward Walter, a captain in the army, who is known as the founder of the Corps of Commissionaires. These gentlemen are descended from Mr. John Walter, of Warwickshire extraction, who died in 1784, leaving two sons, Robert, an officer in the Royal Navy, and John, the younger of whom founded the *Times* newspaper. Mr. Walter died at Teddington, in 1811, and his second son became joint proprietor and sole manager of the leading journal, raising it to a position which has never yet been reached by any newspaper, and which it has since maintained. Mr. Walter was twice married, his first wife being a daughter of Dr. Gregory, vicar of Ham; his second a Kentish lady. Mr. John Walter, M.P., of Bearwood, Mr. H. F. Walter, of Papplewick, and Captain Walter represent the male portion of his family. He had two daughters, one of who married Mr. Thomas Broughton Charlton, of Chilwell Hall, who was High Sheriff of this county last year. From 1841 to 1859 Nottingham was represented by a Walter; first by the Mr. John Walter, to whose energy and ability the *Times* owes its unrivalled position in the world of newspaper letters, and afterwards by his son, who now represents Berkshire. In April, 1841, the late Mr. Walter was elected for Nottingham, in the Conservative interest, in the room of Sir R. Ferguson, when he defeated Mr. Larpent by 138 votes. In June of the same year there was a general election, and Mr. Walter had to undergo another contest, which he did in conjunction with Mr. T. B. Charlton; the Liberal candidates being Sir George Larpent and Sir John Cam Hobhouse. Appealing to the electors on that occasion, Mr. Walter said they would always find him serving the just rights and privileges of the Sovereign and the aristocracy, but not unmindful of the just rights and privileges of the people, and especially of the poor. There are still some left who can remember the disgraceful scenes that took place at that election, and the resignation of Messrs. Walter and Charlton,

which had the effect of preserving the tranquillity of the town, and which furnishes one of the brightest incidents in the history of local Conservatism. In the following year, while the embers of party feeling were still smouldering, there was another election in Nottingham. Sir George Larpent accepted the Chiltern Hundreds, in other words, resigned his seat, and Mr. Walter was again induced to come forward in the Conservative interest. His opponent on this occasion was Mr. Joseph Sturge, who was described at that time as the exponent of teetotalism and Chartism. This compound of two elements having nothing in common with each other, was not relished by the majority of the electors, who returned Mr. Walter. The election, however, was declared void ; Mr. Walter was unseated on petition. Commenting on this circumstance, a Berkshire journal spoke of Mr. Walter's first victory as having given that majority of one which overthrew the Ministry, and of his second as having crushed the new alliance between Radicalism and Chartism. There was, of course, another election, and the house of Bearward was again to play a prominent part in the contest. There were those who sympathised with Mr. Walter as to the result of the enquiry, which had deprived him of his seat. His high character, his unquestioned ability, his fearless independence, and his unwavering support of those principles which he believed to be right and true, had won respect for his name amongst the more intelligent section of the community, and the son was readily adopted by the party that had been so true to the father. The younger Mr. Walter—the present member for Berkshire, presented himself, and this is how he dealt with the grave charge of being young—he was then twenty-five, and fresh from Oxford—that was brought against him. He said, “ I trust I shall be able to prove to your satisfaction that even youth is not without its advantages of zeal, of activity, and of increasing knowledge, which I shall be careful to improve, and which, like the spring-time of the year, though unpromising and cloudy for a time, may yet, if duly attended to, give promise of a rich and abundant harvest.” But Mr. Walter's harvest of votes was not sufficiently abundant to send him to Parliament, and the other candidate, Mr. Thomas Gisborne, was victorious by a majority of 111. At the general election four years later, Mr. Walter came forward at the eleventh hour, and was returned at the head of the poll ; the late Feargus O'Connor, the promoter of a famous bubble land scheme for the advantage of the poorer residents, being second. The day after this magnificent triumph at the polling booths Mr. Walter lost his father. The *Times* of that day thus referred to the election and to the death of the elder Mr. Walter :—

“ Nottingham was a name of disappointment, and, in the mouth of the enemy a name of reproach. All that survived from repeated struggles was a strong attachment in the minds of a

respectable class, and a deep feeling that justice had not been done to a great man, a friend, and a benefactor. But we repeat there did not exist in any quarter, neither in the constituency, nor, we are assured in the successful candidate, any idea of attempting to retrieve the past. In this stagnant and unalterable state affairs continued till Wednesday. Then, at the eleventh hour, a rash adventure, a mere forlorn hope, was attempted by a few sanguine gentlemen, more with the view of keeping up the feeling of independence, and ruffling the equanimity of the parties in possession, than with any idea of possible success. Without a shadow of authority from Mr. J. Walter,—without even his knowledge, his name was proposed. That day there was no promise of success beyond the possibly exaggerated hopes of a few ardent friends. On Thursday came the poll ; a process which usually dwindles down to nothing, such hasty and ill-advised endeavours. In this instance, however, there was a far different result. In the meantime an event had taken place, which threw a strange melancholy aspect over this singular proceeding. On the morning of Thursday, at the moment of the opening of the poll, it became generally known that he whose merits really were at issue in this contest, and whose public character it was sought justify, was no more. The injustice heretofore done to his name, the slight done to the opinions, and especially the great cause of humanity, with which he had been associated, the length, the labour, and the cost of his political exertions, the sincerity of his attachments to those whom he had once taken in hand, and the greatness of his achievements for the social and political progress of his country, were all brought before the constituency, and pressed with electric force to their minds. Nothing in the history of elections has ever equalled the sudden simultaneousness of the change. Men of all classes and minds rushed to the poll. In a few hours he, who had hardly been thought of the day before, and who was then only regarded as the heir of his father's name, was not only at the head of the poll, but declared to be elected by a majority amounting to nearly double the number enlisted in support of the two late members. Sir J. C. Hobhouse, a Cabinet Minister, fifteen years member for Nottingham, polled 803 ; Mr. Walter, the son of that gentleman who had so often been twitted with the name of that city, polled 1,683. In solemn earnestness we commend this marvellous result to those rash politicians who think it an easy thing to stifle the energies of a great cause, and the honours of a good name. Mr. Walter was not only unseated, not only flouted continually with the failure of his political cause, but out of the statesman's way,—he was at last removed from this troublesome scene. But, 'even in their ashes live their wonted fires,'—the very day after his departure his name and his cause, in the very scene of his reverses, triumphed far beyond his utmost expectations. One day closed his political career, the next day commenced, with

the brightest auspices, a career we hope not less useful and honourable."

At the election of 1852 Mr. Walter was again returned for Nottingham as a Liberal-Conservative, together with the late Lord Belper, then Mr. Edward Strutt, a third candidate, Mr. Charles Sturgeon, described as a Chartist, and receiving 512 votes, being placed at the bottom of the poll. In the following year Mr. Strutt accepted office in the Government, and was returned again without opposition. In 1856 the senior member was raised to the peerage, and the late Mr. Charles Paget was elected in his stead. In 1857 there was another general election, and Mr. Walter again offered himself as a faithful follower of the policy of Lord Palmerston. The other candidates were Mr. Paget and Mr. Ernest Jones, the latter of whom sought unsuccessfully to revive the languishing popularity of Chartism. A fourth candidate, Mr. Samuel Fox, of High-street, was nominated, but his nomination was not seconded, and he was, therefore, excluded from the list. On that occasion Mr. Walter told the people in a speech, in which he warmly advocated the Palmerstone policy, that Nottingham lace would find its way into China, a piece of prophecy, which has perhaps been justified by the development of the staple trade. For a third time Mr. Walter was elected for Nottingham, in 1857, on independent principles, and, in 1859, he transferred his political services to his native county, in which he has so large a stake. Seeing that the name of Walter was so intimately connected with the politics of this borough for close upon twenty years, during a not unimportant epoch in the history of this country, and looking at the influence it has commanded, and still commands, the foregoing retrospect will not be considered out of place in an article dealing with the residence of one bearing that name, who has lived in this county since the year following his brother's last election for Nottingham.

The drawing room at Papplewick is of handsome proportions, and the decorations of walls and ceiling have been much admired by those who have seen them. The doors of mahogany, close-fitting and smooth, are about the finest in the county. Three or four handsome walnut cabinets form part of the decorative furniture of this apartment. They contain a wonderful collection of birds' eggs—perhaps the best private collection in England. The eggs are arranged in layers of drawers, and are properly named and classified, some attention having been paid to the placing of the different sizes and to the arrangement of colours. Some of the foreign eggs are very beautiful in colour and shape, and there is an almost endless variety, from the tiny pearl-like egg of the humming bird to that of the extinct auk or of the hairy-looking apteryx of New Zealand, a stuffed specimen of which is to be seen outside, in the hall. Eggs of the

ostrich, emu, cassowary, and the ova of the alligator are preserved in larger receptacles than the drawers of these cabinets, and two of the eggs of the largest of the feathered tribe have been made into very handsome vases, which form part of the pretty ornamentation of the drawing room. There are no pictures or furniture to remind one of the Montagu connection. Formerly the dining room contained portraits of the first Earl of Sandwich, the first Earl of Halifax, the Earl of Manchester, and other family connections, but they were removed before Mr. Henry Walter knew Papplewick, and their places have not been supplied by other works of the painter. Now and again Montagu relics have been found about the estate. A short time ago a labourer in the fields discovered a discoloured plate on which were engraven the arms of the Montagus, and the relic was duly forwarded to the present owner of the family estates. The hall enjoys a charming situation, and the country round is historical and full of interest. From an eminence not many yards distant from the hall, the grey walls of Newstead are to be seen, and dark woods and gentle hills, green with pasture grass, or golden with ripening corn, help to make up a pleasant and refreshing landscape. Papplewick was the favourite residence of Mr. Frederick Montagu. He liked this solid and comfortable house and the picturesque and fertile estate attached to it, and, writing to a friend, he says, with a touch of playful irony, that in the solitudes of his Nottinghamshire home he felt as happy as if he were listening to the overloaded speeches of Lord Shelburne at the Treasury. Since those days collieries have sprung up in the neighbourhood, and their smoke is blown across a landscape, which was once so still and unfrequented that outlaws roasted their venison within its recesses, and found a hiding place among its hills. On the side of one of these hills close to the hall, there is a small cavern, which legend says was used by the most famous of all outlaws, as a place of shelter for his horses, and to this day it is called Robin Hood's stable. If Mr. Walter had lived at Papplewick in those days and had bred famous Berkshire pigs, as he does now, it is probable that the venison diet of Robin Hood and his followers would have been varied by the introduction of roast pork, and that the black swine which now pass a lazy, comfortable life in the adjoining farm yard would not have been so secure. In its material aspects the country round about is much as it was long ago, and the tenant of Papplewick enjoys some of the prettiest scenery in the county, with the comforts of a refined and cultivated English home.

RAMPTON MANOR.

IN the billiard room at Rampton Manor there are two standards which were the first things that Colonel Eyre showed to me, and of which he, as a distinguished soldier, may justly feel proud. Where and when the material of which they are composed was woven it matters not, but it is interesting to know that they were once uplifted in battle, and were waved by the enemy at the siege of Lucknow, when

Handful of men as we were, we were English in heart and in limb,
Strong with the strength of the race to command, to obey, to endure.

The presence of such trophies as these in a quiet peaceful mansion in the corner of an English county, and the property of an English country gentleman, is not common. In this case they suggest something of family history and ancestral proclivity. These discoloured banners, the fabric of which had been pierced by the bullets of those who fought each one as if "hope for the garrison hung but on him," (to use again the stirring words of the Laureate,) were captured by a company of the Second Rifle Brigade, in which Colonel Eyre was an officer. You would hardly think that the gently-courteous country gentleman, full of vigorous activity, whose conversation runs upon the arts of peace, and only occasionally upon political warfare, had seen so much active and exciting service, had been wounded in the service of his country, and had been decorated with medals of which any brave man might well be proud. Colonel Eyre has carried arms for nearly thirty years, including the period during which he has had the command of one of the volunteer regiments of this county. He fought in the Crimea; he was wounded at the attack of the Redan; he served during the Indian Mutiny, was present at the siege and fall of Lucknow, and was present with Ross's camel corps at the fall of Calpee. A man who has been mixed up with events like these knows something of the horrors of war, and can appreciate the peace and tranquility of an English country life, to which certain duties and responsibilities are attached.

The Eyres may be described as a family of soldiers. In the early years of his service, Colonel Eyre was attached to the staff of his relative, Lieut.-General Sir William Eyre, in the capacity of *aide-de-camp*, and he can look back with pride upon a line of ancestors who have been skilled in the use of arms, and who have attained distinguished positions in the service. Sir Gervase Eyre

was a commander of forces in the reign of one of the Charlises, and was killed in the defence of Newark Castle in the early part of the seventeenth century ; and the descendant of this distinguished officer, Sir George Eyre, K.C.B., held an important command. Anthony Hardolph Eyre, the representative of an after generation, was also a lieut.-colonel in the army ; and another of Colonel Eyre's lineal ancestors, in the First Foot Guards, was killed at the Battle of Barossa, in Spain, in 1811. To the memory of several of these distinguished representatives of an ancient line there are tablets on the walls of Rampton Church. From this it will be gathered that Colonel Eyre, the gallant commander of the North Notts. Rifle Volunteers, comes of a warlike stock. Of his own honourable connection with the profession of arms there are evidences at Rampton which his guests may see. In his little room where books and papers are kept, there are a number of trifles brought from the Redan and from Lucknow, some of them displayed on the same walls, as is a collection of admirable sepia and other drawings, representing highland sports and moorland scenery, which have been executed by Mrs. Eyre. Carefully framed and preserved from destroying influences is a slight sketch—a half finished trifle, but displaying remarkable artistic merit, which was rapidly outlined by an officer attached to Sir William Eyre's staff at the moment the Zouaves were making their gallant attack on the Malakoff, in September, 1855, and representing that spirited movement. This the Colonel thinks much of, and he also takes scrupulous care of a tiny wooden cross—one of twenty that were made as the sad memorials of a cruel event. These were carved out of the wood of the door against which the heads of the unfortunate children were dashed by the murderous Sepoys, at Cawnpore, the blood stains of which massacre were seen by the holder of this small memorial of one of the most inhuman acts that ever darkened the pages of history. A photograph of the members of the 2nd Rifle Brigade, whose courage and fidelity their old lieutenant still speaks of, and small things brought from Lucknow, the Redan, and other fields of conflict, are carefully preserved by the owner of Rampton Manor. Years have passed away since the occurrence of those stirring events of which these small trophies remind one, and we find Colonel Eyre in middle life actively engaged in the affairs of the northern end of the county, and spending much of his time in the study of Imperial politics. Colonel Eyre may not unfitly be described as a practical politician. Many months ago now it occurred to him that taxation pressed unfairly upon landed property, and he is the founder of an association—the first of the kind which has existence in the county, whose object it is to get the taxation more equally distributed amongst those who, though they get the lion's share of the benefits and conveniences for which the taxes are levied, contribute little or nothing to their maintenance or support.

Colonel Eyre may indeed justly claim to rank among the pioneers of rural reform, and it is more than possible that he will live to see his very fair and modest proposals carried into effect. As a magistrate of the county, and as a member of various public bodies, Colonel Eyre renders most useful service, and his advice upon all matters of county administration is always valuable.

The family of which Colonel Eyre is the head is undoubtedly one of the oldest, if not the oldest, in the county. There has been an Eyre at Rampton for more than two hundred years ; and beyond that period the Eyres were possessed of land in Derbyshire to a very considerable extent. In the pages of a very able work recently published by Mr. J. C. Cox, on the churches of Derbyshire, the Eyres are mentioned over and over again, and memorials of them are scattered up and down that county in considerable profusion. In the reign of Henry the Third, a certain William Le Eyr had a residence at Hope, in the Peak district, held lands of the King *in capite*, and had to do with the custody of the forests of the High Peak. His ancestor married one of the co-heiresses of George Hercy, the lord of Grove, in Nottinghamshire, and that fine mansion, now the residence of the Harcourt-Vernons, was once the principal seat of the Eyres. Rampton was originally, after the Conquest, the property of Roger de Busli, who seems to have acquired enormous slices of land up and down the county, and before it came into the hands of the Eyres it belonged to the Stanhopes, the Malovels, and the Babingtons. In the reign of James the First, Sir Gervase Eyre, who was commander of the horse, and was slain whilst defending Newark Castle on behalf of his Sovereign, Charles the First, married the co-heiress of John Babington, and by this marriage Rampton came to his descendants, who have held it since. I have already mentioned several of the Eyres who were distinguished in arms. Members of the family have at various periods represented the county in Parliament ; their sons and daughters have at different times married into noble and titled families, and their armorial bearings contain no fewer than five-and-twenty quarterings. The chancel of Rampton Church is filled with mural monuments to the memory of different members of the family, which included an archdeacon of Nottingham ; and in the churches of Derbyshire you may find numerous records of them. At Rowton, in the neighbouring county, they had at one time a mansion, and about 1700, one of them built a chapel near his residence, and made his kinsman, Gervase Eyre, of Rampton, his heir "on condition of his constantly residing at Rowton, where he was to maintain a good house and sober hospitality."

Rampton Manor, as it appears to-day, in bold, well-defined Elizabethan proportions, situated in the midst of rich pasture land, and unobscured by any wealth of foliage, does not suggest antiquity.

It is a handsome modern brick mansion, built thirty years ago, by an eminent architect, and at considerable cost. Its predecessor was built in the reign of the Eighth Henry, but was pulled down more than a century and a half ago. The only trace of the old hall remaining, is an oak shield or panel, on which are carved the arms and crest of the Eyres. This solitary and somewhat modest relic of the old family residence, now hangs over the doorway in one of the lower apartments at Rampton, where there are a number of glass cases containing rare birds of brilliant plumage, which have been shot in different parts of the world, by Colonel Eyre. The principal rooms are bright, and the prospects are cheerful, though the general formation of the country is flat. A mile away, the Trent flows along a broad and bending channel, and a stone thrown across the river falls in Lincolnshire, where, close to the water's edge, are the ruined and turreted walls of what is said to have been a castle. In front of this dismantled brickwork, which once formed part of a substantial and pretentious residence, the Trent flows through green meadows, kept within bounds on the Nottinghamshire side by a sturdy and continuous embankment, which is of great use when the river is swollen by heavy rains. Rampton Manor is said to occupy an elevated position, though this is hardly apparent to one sitting in the comfortable dining room, and looking over the park and meadow land, which spreads away towards the river. In summer, when everything is in full life, the scenery is pretty about here, and one would say that the manor was well situated. Inside, it is very comfortable—filled with bright objects and cheerful furniture, and one realises what is implied by that sober and genuine hospitality which was enjoined upon the owner's ancestors nearly two centuries ago.

In the dining room there are a few good pictures ; in the drawing room are several excellent copies of old masters. Among these is a striking copy of Murillo's "Children of the Shell," which was executed by an artist Colonel Eyre had met in Rome. There are also admirable copies of two well-known works by Guido and Albert Durer, which, with other pictures in the drawing room, overlook some choice pieces of Sevres China. Among the dining room collection are two interesting landscapes, by Salvator Rosa. Originally they are supposed to have formed one large picture, which some former possessor divided into two parts, a division which increased the collection to which they belonged, and affected a companionship which has not marred the conception of the painter, or caused any mutilation of his work. They are parts of a mountain scene, into one half of which figures are introduced, the central one an astrologer or seer, who, with outstretched arms, appears to be invoking some spirit of the mountain. The picture is a good example of Salvator's comprehensive genius and lively poetic

imagination, and the attitudes and actions of the figures are natural and full of dignity. In another part of the room there is a characteristic painting by Bloemart—a cook engaged in trussing a fowl ; and there are good examples of the work of Van der Docs—probably Simon of that name, and of Van Diest, the last-named in two small frames, with herons and dogs upon a few inches of canvas. There are, besides, a fruit piece and a Dutch painting without a name, making up a small, but interesting, collection. In these old houses of the county one generally sees what is good in the way of pictures. If they are modern pictures, they are well chosen ; if they are old, while they tell no tale of artistic taste bearing upon their owner, they say something at least for his ancestors, and form a hidden contribution to the art treasures of the country.

RUFFORD ABBEY.



NE does not see Rufford Abbey to the best advantage on a keen frosty day in the waning of the year. The lime trees, which form an avenue to the house, are bereft of their leaves ; the larger tress in the spacious park have most of them shed their foliage, which has collected in brown crisp masses on the ground beneath the naked branches. The oak, the sturdiest of the woody brotherhood, still retains its vesture in a shrivelled form, and there are bright patches of gold and crimson in the plantations. The autumn colour is not yet wiped out. The roads leading through the park are sentinelled by stately beeches, and from under one of them a dense flock of wood pigeons rises, leaving their repast of beech mast at the sound of wheels in alarm, and scattering the crisp leaves with the action of their wings. There is a thin coating of ice on the lake, and on the smooth lawn in front of the abbey there are triangular patches of hoar frost, where the shadows of the building fall. A Sherwood Forest mansion might be visited under more unpleasant conditions than those which present themselves on a clear frosty day in the middle of November. The abbey could not have been quieter than it was on this particular morning, in those days when its floors were trodden by the sandalled feet of Cistercian monks, in the periods of unutterable silence which intervened between orisons, seven hundred years ago. The result of a very modest pull at the bell handle is startling ; but the sound is so very modern and prosaic that it serves to destroy the sense of awe, which a protracted search into the past history of monastic institutions invariably brings. Once inside the abbey, one forgets traditions, and learns to look, if not with contempt, at any rate with indifference upon ancient customs and Cistercian characteristics. How is it possible to preserve one's respect for Ulf, who is said to have held the Liberty of Rufford before the Conquest, in that modern drawing room ? Here the walls are hung with crimson satin in gilded panels ; there are costly cabinets and inlaid tables, and when you remove the chintz covers, which keep the dust from the furniture during the master's absence, there are revealed the brightest mysteries of needlework, the sight of which would have disturbed the complacency of the Saxon proprietor. Probably the shade of the Conqueror's nephew, who afterwards held the fee, and perhaps inherited the rude dwelling and family plate of the departed Saxon,

would be staggered by an introduction to the suites of handsome bed rooms hung with rare tapestry, and fitted with costly modern furniture, and even the spirit of a certain Earl of Lincoln, who founded the abbey, in 1148, and was good enough to provide comfortable quarters for a colony of monks, in honour of the Virgin Mary, could it be summoned from the vasty deep, would show signs of perplexity at the intelligence that the abbey was heated by means of hot air. The latest of the Seventeen Abbots, who held monastic sway at Rufford from the time of its foundation as an abbey, in the reign of Stephen, to its dissolution in that of the Eighth Henry, whose portrait now hangs on the walls of the staircase, would not have known the significance of that minature table with its green cloth and pockets, which stands at one end of the brick hall. Fancy old Abbot de Ryme reading extracts from the "Turf Calendar" that lies on yonder table, to his cowed brethren, who probably knew the taste of venison better than do those who listen every week to the liturgy in the little chapel at the abbey. After the acquirement of Rufford by the Earl of Shrewsbury and Waterford, measures appear to have been taken to purify it from the religious sanctity which the monks left behind them. In 1574 Bess of Hardwick, who seems to have been capable of employing as much ingenuity and skill in match-making as in the building of houses and the laying out of gardens, succeeded in inducing Charles Stuart to visit Rufford, and in getting a probably expensive and tiresome daughter off her hands, to the great delight of her noble husband, who breathed his sense of relief in a letter to a friend. During this period the abbey was frequently visited by King James and his son, who were fond of hunting the Sherwood Forest deer. At the beginning of the seventeenth century the Rufford estates passed to the Savile family, the portraits of several of whom still adorn the walls of the abbey. The first of the distinguished family, which has held Rufford for successive generations, was Sir George Savile, a baronet of James the First's creation. He belonged to a family possessing property in Yorkshire and Lincolnshire, and was an accomplished scholar, for he re-edited the works of St. Chrisostom, and founded two important professorships at Oxford. It is recorded that he descended from a long line of the Saviles, of Thornhill, Eland, and elsewhere in Yorkshire, whose origin as a family is traced by his historians to very remote periods, and that some of the family were consuls of Rome prior to the Christian Era. In 1833 the then Sir George Savile was raised to the peerage as Viscount Halifax, and fifty years later he was created a marquis. He was buried in Westminster Abbey, in 1695. At the death of the second Marquis the title became extinct, and Rufford was held by several generations of baronets, one of whom, Sir George Savile, eighth baronet, represented Yorkshire in five successive Parliaments. "In him," it is said, "was blended dignity, affability, rectitude, and

eminent abilities." From the beginning of the present century down to 1856 Rufford has been possessed by the Earls of Scarborough, when in the year just named it became the property of the late owner, Mr. Henry Savile, a Deputy-Lieutenant of Nottinghamshire, of which county he was High Sheriff, in 1861. Mr. Savile died in 1881, and was succeeded in the estates by Mr. Augustus Lumley Savile, his brother.

The Rufford Abbey of to-day, standing grey and solitary, in the midst of forest scenery, with smooth stretches of lawn, and further away a weed-grown lake of picturesque formation, is a modern mansion. That is to say, it has been deprived by its several owners of those features which gave it a monastic character, and by successive stages of alteration, it has been converted into a residence suited to the requirements of a country gentleman of large estates and large influence. It is now a piece of architectural patchwork most interesting to look upon, presenting no irregularity to the eye of the rare visitor, and looking like what it is—a great and important house. The mansion is in pretty much the same condition as it was when it came into the hands of Mr. Savile, at the death of the eighth Earl of Scarborough. The south end is the oldest portion of the building, and though it has within a recent date been dealt with by the painters and decorators, the masonry is as it was in the days of its first lay possessor. If the sight of so much modern furniture and bright colour in the various rooms should cause one to doubt whether a house containing all the costly surroundings of patrician life had ever been the home of a colony of monks, a visit to a crypt would serve to satisfy the sceptic. This part of the original building was brought to light some years ago, and its arched proportions, sharp and clearly defined, remain for the guidance of archæologists, and to overlook the comforts of servants.

To the late Mr. Savile's predecessor belongs the credit of furnishing and decorating the rooms in excellent taste, for no material alterations have been made in the internal arrangement of the abbey during the last quarter of a century. Such alterations would indeed be superfluous. How, for instance, could the drawing room be improved, even in the direction of further modernisation? The panels of pale crimson satin, with their silver floral ornaments, which adorn the walls, are apparently as bright and as free from soil as they were twenty years ago. The furniture—the needlework chairs, and tables of rare and polished woods; the beautiful cabinets will last for generations, and surely it would be a sin to remove the plain antique fireplace, and to replace it with something gorgeously modern. The most interesting part of modern Rufford is to be found upstairs. Here there are grand suites of rooms hung with tapestry—pictures on canvas, wonderful works of art wrought by delicate fingers, and

displaying an industry and a patience which does not belong to these modern times. There is a sombre indescribable kind of appearance in all tapestried rooms, and here in the State bed room, where George the Fourth once slumbered, with its sumptuous hangings of pale yellow silk and canopy of honeycomb work just a trifle faded, on this still quiet morning, and in this still quiet abbey, one is impressed with a sense of something awfully historic. There is a rare succession of these tapestried bed rooms, with their elaborately carved bed furniture and rich hangings, with the family arms blazoned in needlework at the back of the bed. The tapestry for the most part is in an excellent state of preservation. The subjects are chiefly scriptural; and there are one or two scenes from the early history of Rome, and some forest scenery in olive green. The house contains an immense number of rooms, and from the windows of those in the upper portion charming woodland views are obtainable.

The principal room is the long gallery, 114 feet long, and 36 wide, which now is in a somewhat tumbled state. The late Mrs. Savile seems to have had a liking for private theatricals, and the long gallery not very long ago was fitted with a stage, and those accessories necessary to the production of plays. The flood of sunshine admitted when one of the shutters is unfastened, is insufficient to light up the whole of this long apartment, and it brings to view a very handsome chimney piece, with some fine carving, and a number of pictures. One of these, the portrait of Lady Gertrude Pierrepont, wife of the first Marquis of Halifax, who was a Savile, appears in two other parts of the house. A beautiful face in early life; in later life still beautiful, the beauty lines still unswept by "Decay's effacing finger." The Marquis of Halifax is also there beside his lady, and there is a large painting of what is supposed to be the abbey of former days. The library is a large room containing a good collection of literature, amongst which the modern novel has found a place beside the venerable tome, and "Ouida" and "Whyte Melville" take their places in close proximity to ancient philosophers. The brick hall is an interesting curiosity. It gets its name from the floor, which is of plain red brick, polished, and very pleasant to walk upon. The beautiful carved mantel-piece of Caen stone, with the family arms, the cases of stuffed birds, a miniature billiard table, and a really handsome modern screen of polished wood richly carved, are hardly in consonance with the old oak table, long and narrow, with its bench of corresponding length, the quaint old chests, the queer little imps in stone, who start from the walls, and the deep old-fashioned casements.

The drawing room has already been mentioned in this sketch; the dining room is a small, square, and lofty apartment. Another large room was called the billiard room; it has now changed its

name and is called the study. It, too, is a fine room with many portraits on the walls. There is Lord Spencer, George, Earl of Shrewsbury, the Earl of Northumberland, Lord Halifax and Lady Savile, daughter of Lord Coventry, keeper of the great seal in Charles the First's time, "a lady remarkable for her zeal and devotion to the Royal cause, from the support of which no danger or fear of death would deter." A more valuable tribute to her memory is conveyed in the words which appear under the portrait, "Her spirit was equalled only by her piety and goodness of heart." Then there is Sir William Savile, the Earl of Stratford, Lady Cole, and other distinguished family connections. There is a fine collection of portraits at Rufford, and a few good pictures of another kind, including two sea scapes of considerable merit, and some classical paintings. These pictures are scattered over various parts of the house. Some of them are in the bed rooms, a large number are in the picture gallery, and some in the study. Perhaps the choicest part of the collection is to be seen on the grand staircase. Here there is a Snyders, "The Boar Hunt," a large and valuable painting, and a large number of portraits—gentlemen in hose and doublet, ladies in ruffs and frills. Some of the worthies of Elizabeth's time keep company with those of Charles I. and Henry VIII., and Sir Philip Sydney, in an immense frill and pink doublet, fixes the intruder on the staircase, with a cold stare from a pair of intellectual eyes set in a pale, thoughtful face. I should have liked to spend more time with the favourite Elizabethan poet, the charm of whose music, carried through ages, has not yet died away, with the grosser Henry, and with the straight-limbed courtiers and stern cavaliers of the staircase, but the light is becoming dimmer, mists are beginning to gather in the woods, and over the lake, and the day is nearly spent.

SERLBY.

THERE is already the faintest suspicion of autumnal colour in the beechen avenues of Serlby, in the very north of the county. It is a famous place for beeches, almost as large and as towering as those which fringe a celebrated Thames district. To reach the hall you have to pass through a fine beech avenue. The trees are tall, stately, and of uniform height. They are in full leaf on this August day, and in the transient periods of sunshine the road bestrewn with the green-looking little husks, which contain the tiny fruit of these giant trees, is flecked with restless patches of light. These trees are in the park, and they follow the curve of the road, which dips into the hamlet of Serlby, whose few houses are occupied by Lord Galway's people, and belong to the estate. From the Bawtry side you get no distant view of Serlby. Its white walls come upon you suddenly—you pass through a slender iron gate, large enough to admit a carriage, flanked by a dark growth of shrubbery, and the few yards of crisp gravel walk lead to the south front of the family residence of the Moncktons. The owner of Serlby may well be proud of his ancestral beech trees. Here these tall giants of vegetation, standing in almost military exactitude, have drawn their forces nearly up to the house, as though they had a desire to become domesticated, but dare not make further advances in that direction. The broad gravel walk that runs parallel with the mansion, terminates with an avenue of beeches, which provides a delightful vista. One half of the avenue is carpeted with a soft green moss, whose growth has been encouraged. At the extremity there are a couple of statues, and there is a lovely stretch of open country, grassy and well wooded. The moss carpet, which is velvety and soft, has been torn in places by birds in search of insects. The woods are intersected by beech avenues, some of which are narrow and fairy-looking. They are all of them quiet and unfrequented. Rabbits, silver grey and brown, abound in the woods, and with a confidence in human tolerance, which their kind do not usually display, venture onto the lawn in front of the house.

In 1727 John Monckton was created a peer of Ireland—Viscount Galway and Baron Killard—and in that year he purchased the Serlby estate, soon after his marriage with a daughter of the Duke of Rutland. The Moncktons can claim long descent, and it

cannot justly be said that their lives have been useless, idle, or undistinguished. As early as 1545, William Monckton, of Cavil, in Yorkshire, in obedience to the command of his Sovereign, repaired with his tenants and retainers to Newcastle, there to oppose the threatened invasion of the Scots and the French. The title has extended into a seventh generation, and the heads of the house have generally been legislators. The first Viscount represented Clithero, in Lancashire, and Pontefract, in successive Parliaments, was appointed a Commissioner of his Majesty's Revenue in Ireland, and afterwards Surveyor-General of the King's "Honours, Woods, Forests, &c., in England and Wales." In 1741 his lordship received the degree of LL.D. on the installation of the Duke of Newcastle as Chancellor of the University of Cambridge. The second Viscount was appointed receiver of his Majesty's crown and farm rents in several counties, and he was returned Member of Parliament for Pontefract and Thirsk. The first Viscount was Member for York and Pontefract, and a Privy Councillor. The sixth and late Viscount, who died in 1876, represented the Hundred of Bassetlaw for many years, and was at one time a Lord-in-Waiting to the Queen. The present Lord Galway was first returned to Parliament for North Nottinghamshire, in 1872, when Mr. Speaker Denison was raised to the peerage. He has retained the seat since, and in the fourth session of Lord Beaconsfield's last Government he was selected to move the Address to the Throne in the Commons. Stored away at Serlby there is an old and rusty helmet, in which decay has eaten great holes. A stream of rusty particles escape from it as Lord Galway takes it from a cupboard for my inspection. This now delapidated head gear once gleamed in the battle field. It was worn by Sir Philip Monckton, whose portrait, by Lely, hangs in the dining room at Serlby. Sir Philip was a brave man, and a distinguished soldier, and his loyalty to the First Charles frequently brought him into difficulties. He fought at Marston Moor, and in half-a-dozen other engagements. His property was twice confiscated, twice his horses were shot from under him, and on one occasion being wounded, he continued fighting with his bridle between his teeth until he was again severely wounded, and made prisoner.

Serlby is a comparatively modern mansion, with an extensive south front, the plainness of which is agreeably broken by a collonaded portico, forming the principal entrance to the house. It enjoys a superb situation. Facing it, stretches a fine expanse of park land, planted with abundant trees—beech and oak—and distributed in that wilful manner, which secures picturesqueness, where methodical arrangement, or observance of any definite rule of order, would fail. The scene is brightened in one direction by the appearance of a lake, whose surface gleams through the openings in the trees, as also does that of a small wandering stream, which holds trout, I should think,

and takes its course to the lake. The end window of the south front, that nearest the quiet beech avenues, and the two handsome cedar trees, which spread their sombre layers far and wide, belongs to the library. In the room is a fairly comprehensive collection of books, and some fine old pictures, chiefly portraits of celebrities by distinguished artists. Amongst them is a Canaletti, which has attracted much attention whilst it has hung there. A few of the best of the Serlby pictures have been exhibited at various times in some of the public galleries of art—notably that at Nottingham Castle. The walls at Serlby are innocent of modern pictures ; the collection is one of old masters. There are portraits by Vandyck, distinguishable by the inexpressible grace of the head, and the delicate beauty of the hands, the flesh transparent enough to show the deep blue of the veins through which the life-current flows ; there are masterpieces of colour displayed in portrait painting, by Sir Peter Lely ; there are specimens of Holbein's work, and Hogarth is not misrepresented. There is a gigantic picture, bearing the sign manual of the pleasure-loving and extravagant Daniel Mytens, covering the end of one of the rooms ; there are several Canaletti's, and the charm of Paulo Panini, whose paintings, chiefly of the ornaments of modern Rome, were esteemed no less for grandeur of architecture, and for truth of perspective, than for their limpid clearness of colour is not wanting. These pictures have been in the family for generations, and when, by the kindness of Lord Galway, they are away on exhibition, they leave an almost painful blank upon the walls, and create an appreciable void in the house. There are a few large pictures in the entrance hall. Some foxes, which have occupied the brush of Renique, are enjoying themselves with a reckless demeanour, which suggests complete forgetfulness of the fangs of the Grove hounds, and a very fine collection of stag heads, which is arranged about the staircase and passages, gives additional evidence that the lord of Serlby is a follower of sport. These are the heads of animals shot in Scotland by the sixth Lord Galway and his son. The most striking pictures in the hall are a fine portrait of Charles the First, by Vandyck, and a large and well-preserved painting representing William the Third entering London, amid all the splendors of a Royal ceremonial. In half-a-dozen frames arranged in the drawing room, from whose windows there is a delightful view, there are portraits by Vandyck. There is his Royal patron, at whose hands the painter received the Monarch's own portrait set in diamonds, and Henrietta, his Queen. There is the Duchess of Buckingham and her family, the Earl of Bedford, and Lord Pembroke. The fine painting on wood of Henry VIII. is by Holbein ; hanging in a line with it are the features of Nicholas Cratzer, Royal astronomer. These pictures have been exhibited at South Kensington, and other places, and possibly may be away at the present time. Panini's picture here is

the interior of St. Peter's. There are some views of Venice, by Canaletti, and the original sketch of the "Descent from the Cross." The picture of Mytens, already alluded to, is remarkable, both for size and quality, if such an association of words may be employed to describe a great work of art. It is 12 feet 2 inches in height, and 15 feet 4 inches in breadth. The principal figures are those of Charles the First and his Queen, with two horses, one of them carrying the curious side saddle of the period, and dogs, observable amongst which latter is the monster King Charles' spaniel. In the foreground, Geoffry Hudson, the dwarf, is exerting all his strength to keep in check a couple of dogs, which are exhibiting a desire to be demonstrative. All the figures are life size, and the picture is so large that some time back, when it was lent to an exhibition at Manchester, it had to be conveyed by road. In the company of Kings and Queens, and of his less warlike descendants, appears Sir Philip Monckton, of the rusted helmet, I had seen previously. Sir Philip's son occupies a place at his warrior father's right; and they are surrounded by an array of ancestors and descendants, including the first, second, third, and sixth Viscounts, the last a striking portrait by Sir Francis Grant. There are also in this distinguished company, General Monckton, who took command at Quebec on the occasion of General Wolfe's death—a fine picture by Weste; the Marquis of Granby, whose memory has been perpetuated by countless sign painters, with more or less consistency, and the famous Lady Cork.

Each Sunday, Divine service is held in a little chapel attached to the hall, and containing Vandyck's representation of "The Crucifixion." Within the pleasure grounds there is a large mound, thickly covered with leafy shrubs and tangled undergrowth. This was once the site of a church, all traces of which have long since disappeared, just as the village of Farworth, the smoke of whose quiet cottages, curled among the trees near Serlby Hall, has disappeared. Not a vestige of the village remains, but the plough occasionally unearths some remnant of brick or stone which once belonged to the foundations. Many years ago, Serlby had a rare collection of statuary, but the graven images, which once adorned its halls, have departed. One or two specimens are still preserved in the grounds. They are lichen grown, discoloured by climatic influences, and smoke. Formerly a portion of what now is the lawn in front of the house was used as a bowling green, a use to which it has been a stranger these many years. The gardens are laid out in Dutch fashion, and they contain some fine shrubs, including two small fir trees, brought from Nova Scotia, which seem to thrive in North Nottinghamshire soil. In one of the divisions of the kitchen garden there is a venerable mulberry tree, a very fine specimen, which may at one time have attracted the attention of Cardinal Wolsey,

for it is supposed that it once adorned the episcopal palace at Scrooby, which was the occasional residence of this celebrated dignitary. In these gardens the edelweiss, a plant whose flowers Mark Twain contemptuously likens to cigar ashes, grows in small quantities. It is said to preserve the person who wears it from ill, but, as it prefers the ice-bound soil of Alpine regions to the more kindly nutriment of this country, it does not often appear in English button-holes.

SHERWOOD LODGE.

THE proverbial dulness of late autumn is sometimes broken by days of exceptional brightness, when the sky is full, not of sober depths of grey, as one of the poets would have us believe it always is in November, but of lively blue, and when the air is so still that you may hear the fall of a shaken leaf. This year the leaves have lingered long, as though they had not had enough of life during the too brief summer ; so that the beeches and other trees at Sherwood Lodge have not yet become "bare ruined choirs," for this morning they are liberally clothed with the golden and umber tints of the autumn season, and brightened by a sunlight which has none of those sickly characteristics of the November sun that the poet Thompson observed. But the gardens, which, earlier in the year, are bright with a variety of colours, are flowerless, for the summer is ended, and dead shrivelled leaves, flying before the gale, have settled upon the lawn, where the tennis nets are still left standing. If all days were like this, Colonel Seely would not have ordered that large square of ground to be filled up with asphalte, in order to provide facilities for the perpetual practice of a game which has properly been voted one of best ever invented. Going through a small plantation towards the kitchen garden, one walks ankle deep in dead leaves, from which a pleasant and freshening odour arises. Some men are clearing them from the gravel, and putting them into a cart. To-morrow, the effect of their labour will be destroyed, for every breath of wind brings more leaves from the branches, and the ground is quickly strewn. The wych elm is a variety of tree which has done well in the grounds of Sherwood Lodge. Its proportions, defined in skeleton fashion, now that the leaves are gone, are very fine. Its branches project in graceful sweeping lines, and its shape is at once imposing and symmetrical.

When Colonel Seely came to Sherwood Lodge, there was nothing worthy the name of an estate attached to it. The house was built about a century ago, and has had some four or five tenants. Colonel Samuel Coape, who was heir to Mrs. Sherbrooke, of Oxton, once resided here, and before Mr. Seely purchased the property, it was the residence of the Rev. George Francis Holcombe, who was Vicar of Arnold, a county magistrate, the possessor of rare social qualities, and a very good judge of horse flesh. Mr. Holcombe was a tenant of Colonel Welfitt's, of Langwith Lodge, who sold the

property some time back, and Mr. Seely no sooner came into possession than he threw the house into a state of bricks and mortar, and commenced improvements on a scale, the magnitude of which may be imagined when it is stated that Sherwood Lodge is about twice as large as it was in Mr. Holcombe's time. The two most important rooms in the house, are the drawing room and library, both of which have been added by Colonel Seely, who evidently intends to make this very desirable residence a permanent home. In making these alterations, care seems to have been taken not to mar the general character of the building, which it would perhaps be impossible to redeem from a certain conventionalism. In these additions, its character has been very wisely preserved, so that Sherwood Lodge, from the Mansfield Road, looks just what it is—a solid brick mansion, imposing enough to indicate the position of its owner, and commodious enough to meet the requirements of a large and influential family. The new rooms are very fine, and furnished with perfect taste. The library is entered through handsome doors of unpolished oak; the mantelpiece is of oak richly carved, and this beautiful woodwork is carried throughout the whole room, even to the organ, which occupies the end opposite the entrance. It may here be mentioned that when the family is at home, this charming apartment is used on Sundays for the purposes of worship. The nearest church is some considerable distance from the house, so service is conducted here, by a clergyman of the Established Church, with the assistance of this beautiful organ, which, in its silent intervals, is a conspicuous ornament in the room. This service is attended by those who belong to the household, and by any who choose to come and take their seats upon the forms which are kept for this interesting devotional gathering. There are some very fine examples of modern pictorial art in this room—amongst them, one in John Linnell's best style. It is called "The Last Load." Probably the waggoner, who is conducting this last load of hay or corn to the rickyard, is as indifferent as is the slow-paced horse in the shafts, to the wonderful light which suffuses the sky and reddens the surface of the mere in the background. I often think that pictures are affected by weather influences. The soft light of this autumnal morning seems to bring out the intenser glow of this summer sky of Linnell's, which illumines the landscape whilst the waggoner is taking the last load to its destination. The pictures at Sherwood Lodge are numerous, modern, and well chosen. There are no knights in armour, or questionable characters, belonging to the court of Charles. They are chiefly landscapes and seascapes by first-rate modern artists. In the bright drawing room, with its pleasant south-easterly aspect, there are several of Birket Foster's happiest efforts, full of transparency and vitality—gems which shine in the world of water-colour. The water-colours, numerous and admirably chosen, are amongst the best of the pictures at Sherwood

Lodge, though they do not represent the whole of the collection, which is distributed over library, drawing room, dining room, and hall, and contains some really good oils. There are water-colours by Birket Foster, Lewis, and Duncan, some of which once formed part of the collection of Lord Dunmore, and oils by Royal Academicians, and by painters of modern notoriety. The sculptors' art is represented in the hall, where there are two exquisite marble pieces, one delineating the recumbent figures of children ; the other representing the graceful figure of a young girl who is caressing a pet lamb. These two beautiful pieces were shown in the International Exhibition of 1851.

Within the last few years, Colonel Seely has made large purchases of land in the neighbourhood of his house, and he has now a considerable stake in the county, in addition to his interest in the family estates in Derbyshire, Surrey, and the Isle of Wight. He is the owner of some 3,000 acres of land in Nottinghamshire ; indeed, he seems to have bought whatever he could lay his hands upon in the neighbourhood of his residence. One of his recent purchases is an estate called Haywood Oaks, not far from Blidworth, which includes a substantial house, some 600 acres of land, and some fifty or sixty grand oak trees, specimens as fine as any in the county, or elsewhere. This portion of the estate is somewhat sequestered ; it stands in the midst of a picturesque country, and its superb cluster of oaks gives it a kind of interest, which attaches to but few places in these days. Ramsdale, another portion of Colonel Seely's recently acquired estate, is nearer home, and upon it there is a lofty hill, from which, on a clear day, can be seen the towers of Lincoln Cathedral. At one time the Colonel thought of making that hill the site of his new house, the situation appeared so favourable, and the views were so fine. All about here the land belongs to the senior Member for Nottingham, who has already inaugurated many improvements. Colonel Seely having thus become a considerable landowner in the county, what more natural than that he should turn his attention to farming ? It is very evident, both from his public utterances and from the condition of the some 1,400 acres at present under his control, that Colonel Seely has given considerable attention to agricultural matters, and those immediately interested in the cultivation of the soil may fairly look with some degree of expectancy for the result of the experience of one, who has been so eminently successful in another important department of industrial life. I may perhaps be permitted to state that Colonel Seely, with his yet limited experience as a practical farmer, has developed certain opinions concerning the chances of agriculture in the future. He has a habit of reducing these matters to statistical proportions, and he thinks that agricultural operations ought to be so systematised as to show, in account form, the sources of gain or loss, with a view, I suppose, to enable people to provide remedies

for mistakes, or facilities for pursuing a successful course. In collieries, Colonel Seely has had considerable experience. Every quarter there is submitted to him an elaborate statement of account bristling with figures, by which he can tell—as surely as he can tell the hour of day by looking at his watch, the financial result of the operations at the several great collieries, of which he and his father are the owners. These figures are an index of what is being done at the collieries ; they tell the cost per ton of getting every seam of coal, and when it is mentioned that between 800,000 and 900,000 tons are got annually from these collieries, it will be understood that the figures referred to are not unimportant. They represent, in fact, a complete analysis of the working of the several collieries, and a system upon which the proper management of the great operations which the Messrs. Seely direct, depends.

Weighted, as he must necessarily be, with the responsibilities attaching to the very large colliery undertakings in which he is engaged, the younger Mr. Seely has devoted himself assiduously for a number of years to various branches of the public service, so that the margin of time left for his own private enjoyment must be very narrow indeed. The public exercises a threefold call upon his time and upon his energies. He is the senior Parliamentary representative of a large constituency, he is Colonel of the Robin Hood Rifles, and he is a magistrate for two counties, in one of which he officiates with some regularity. In these days of long sittings, interminable debate, and persistent opposition of a factious order, the duties of a Member of Parliament are by no means light, and the benches of the House of Commons can hardly be described as seats in Paradise. Mr. Seely is not an inexperienced Member of Parliament. His father has sat in the House of Commons for upwards of a quarter of a century ; he himself has been twice elected for a great commercial constituency. At the general election of 1868 he first solicited the suffrages of the electors of Nottingham, when he came forward, in conjunction with Mr. P. W. Clayden as a Liberal candidate. On that occasion there were five candidates in the field, the late Sir Robert Clifton, Colonel Wright, and Mr. Bernal Osborne being the other three. Mr. Seely was defeated, and Sir Robert Clifton and Colonel Wright elected, Mr. Seely being 587 votes behind the last-named gentleman. On the death of the senior member, in 1869, Mr. Seely was returned for Nottingham, in opposition to Mr. Digby Seymour. He continued to represent the borough until 1874, when he retired from the representation, for reasons which were perfectly justifiable. At the last election, in April of 1880, he was returned at the head of the poll by a majority, which showed that the people of Nottingham had long been anxious again to have him as their representative. Meanwhile, Mr. Seely had been appointed Colonel of the Robin Hood Rifles—a position of

which any man might well be proud. This was certainly a post to which duties, at once arduous and responsible, were attached, but when Colonel Wright resigned the command of the regiment the choice of his successor was made without demur. The appointment of Colonel Seely was at once popular and appropriate, and, under the influence of his strict and even discipline and soldierly ability, the regiment has maintained its proud position. With all these things on hand—his collieries, farming, and Parliamentary, military, and magisterial duties—Colonel Seely has not much leisure at his disposal, and with his time so fully occupied, and his energy so fully taxed, he must of necessity sacrifice many of those social and other pleasures, which are within the reach of men of wealth and position.

STAPLEFORD HALL. THE WRIGHTS.

MR. Charles Ichabod Wright, best known as Colonel Wright, of Stapleford Hall, in this county, and of Watcomb Park, Devonshire, is the head of a family which has every claim to be numbered amongst the representatives of the great houses of this county. The Wrights of Mapperley are represented on the male side by four brothers, of whom the late Colonel of the Robin Hoods is the eldest. The other brothers, who are well known here, are Mr. Henry Smith Wright, of Park Hill, in Hampshire; Mr. Frederick Wright, of Lenton Hall, a place which, generations ago, was occupied by his ancestors; and Mr. George Howard Wright. The two elder brothers have, to some extent, at any rate, been identified with local politics; the two younger have taken a very useful part in movements for the improvement of the moral and social condition of the people. In his early life Colonel Wright probably enjoyed advantages which do not come within the reach of all sons of the wealthy. His father was not only a ripe scholar but a thoroughly practical man. He combined with a cultivated intellect and the possession of high scholastic acquirements, a genuine spirit of business. Such a combination is rare; the scholar may become an ascetic; the business man may sacrifice his finer faculties on the shrine of Mammon, or in the idle pursuit of profitless forms of pleasure. In any reference to Colonel Wright and to his antecedents, one must say something of his father, because he was a distinguished man who is yet very well remembered, though the introduction of his name in this part of the article is somewhat out of chronological order. The late Mr. Ichabod Charles Wright, whose Christian names the Colonel bears, joined his father in the banking business in the year 1825, after he had become a fellow of his college. In the year of his entrance into business he married the daughter of the first Lord Denman, who afterwards became Lord Chief Justice of England. His after life was spent most industriously between business and study. He translated the "Inferno," "Purgatorio," and "Paradiso" of Dante, which translations were published by Messrs. Longmans, in 1833, 1836, and 1840. A second edition of these translations was published in 1845, and their value may be gathered from the verdict of a critic who, writing in one of the leading journals said: "Lord Denman may well be proud of his son-in-law, who has converted into his lordship's vernacular one of the grandest works of

the human imagination, making the English peasant familiar with the loftiest dreams of genius that ever swept the eyelids of the Italian poet. These translations may be placed amongst the worthiest of the kind we possess in our own language." In 1841 Mr. Wright published "Thoughts on Currency," and in 1847, "Evils of the Currency," subjects on which he was well qualified to write. In 1865 he published a translation of the Iliad of Homer in blank verse, which may take its place with the translations of Pope and Lord Derby. Mr. Wright's last issue from the Press was in 1857, and consisted of a selection from the Psalms, in verse, which was written when he was partially blind. Of this distinguished and respected gentleman, whose remains were laid in Carrington Churchyard only nine years ago, Colonel Wright is the eldest son, and it is more than probable that to his early training are now due, in a measure, those qualities which have made him so popular in this town, and which leave such a pleasant impression upon those with whom he comes in contact, whether in the relations of business, or within the hospitable walls of either of his country residences. The lineage of the Wrights of Mapperley starts with a Thomas Wright, of Nottingham, who, born in 1724, had sons, Ichabod, of Mapperley, and John Smith, of Rempstone Hall, who was High Sheriff of this county in 1815. The third son lived at Upton Hall, near Newark, and was also in turn High Sheriff of the county. His son was Joseph Banks Wright, who married into the Dashwood (Stanton Hall) family. Then we come to Ichabod Wright, grandfather to the four brothers who now represent the Nottinghamshire branch of the family, who married Miss Harriet Day, of Yarmouth, by whom he had fourteen children, amongst them nine daughters, most of whom married into families of distinction, whilst one of his sons married a daughter of Archbishop Howley, the then Primate, and another a near relative of Lord Ellenborough's. One of the daughters, of whom Colonel Wright and his brothers are nephews, married a son of Lord Boston; another married Sir John Shaw Lefevre, a man of considerable distinction, and brother to Lord Eversley; a third married one of Lord Carlisle's sons, who became Dean of Lichfield; and a fourth became Lady Overstone, when her husband, Mr. Samuel Jones Lloyd, was raised to the peerage.

It is somewhat remarkable that this large family comprised three sets of twins. After this gentleman, came the distinguished man who translated the wondrous Tale of Troy, and now Colonel Wright perpetuates the favourite forenames which for generations have been borne by the head of the Wrights of Nottinghamshire. As the Wrights of Swanwick, in Derbyshire, are another branch of the family, it would perhaps be well to glance at such parts of their pedigree as affect the Colonel's family. We are now enabled to go back two centuries earlier than the house of Thomas Wright, of

Nottingham, and to trace the family to a John Wright, of Stowmarket, in Suffolk, whose will was made in 1557, and who assumed the *alias* Camplyon—a rather picturesque patronym, by the way. His first son was Captain John Wright, who suffered eight years' imprisonment in Newark Castle for his attachment to the Parliamentary cause, and it was very natural that he should never be able to understand why he was incarcerated. He afterwards acquired property in several parts of Nottinghamshire, and in a certain part of Suffolk, and at his death he was buried in St. Peter's Church, in this town. The second son of this gentleman settled at Bingham, and was interred in St. Mary's Church, Nottingham, where there is a monument to his memory. He left two sons, Samuel and Ichabod, the first named of whom was born about the year 1697. Ichabod, the second son, born in 1700, is described as a banker, who owned lands in Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire. This member of the family, so far as I have been able to make out, was originally engaged in the Baltic trade, and late in his life, about the year 1760, he devoted a portion of his wealth to the establishment of Wright's Bank, taking his two sons into partnership. This, the first of the family, who was christened Ichabod, is also buried in the precincts of St. Mary's Church. John, the heir of Ichabod, was also a banker in Nottingham; he married a daughter of John Sherbrooke, of this town, and left issue several children, one of whom, Samuel, of Gunthorpe, married a daughter of Lord Coventry. His eldest son, John Wright, banker, of Langar and Lenton Hall, principal proprietor of the Butterley Works, married a daughter of Mr. Berresford, of Ashbourne, Derbyshire. His eldest son, also of Lenton Hall, died in Naples, in 1828, and left a daughter, who became the wife of the Earl of Buckinghamshire. One of the sons of this John Wright was the late Mr. Frank Wright, of Osmaston Manor, a magistrate for Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire, and Staffordshire, and High Sheriff of the first-named county in 1842, who married a daughter of Sir Henry Fitzherbert, of Tissington. From documents in the possession of Colonel Wright, and from other sources, I have selected such portions of this pedigree as bore more directly upon the family of bankers.

Colonel Wright is undoubtedly one of the most popular of our local public men. Yet he is no orator as Brutus was; his public speeches are delivered in a hesitating manner, and they convey to the listener the impression, which is rightly founded, that public demonstrations are not in his line, and that he would very much prefer to be away from the glare of that fierce light which beats about the life of a public man. Yet Colonel Wright's public career may be described as eminently successful. He got into Parliament twelve years ago with very little trouble; he simply put himself in nomination at the eleventh hour, and the people returned him with

acclamation. Ill health, combined perhaps with some little dislike of the stormy atmosphere of political life, induced Colonel Wright to give up his seat after a few months of senatorial experience, but he continued to command the Robin Hood Rifles for a long period after his resignation, and no one questioned the prudence or the policy of the step he had taken. He was as popular as ever, and at the head of the famous regiment in whose welfare he took, and still takes, such a thorough interest, and on the occasion of his rare attendance at public gatherings, whether political or social, his presence was equally acceptable, and he had still that hold upon public estimation which he has always maintained. Such is the picture, imperfect, perhaps, in some of its lines, but truthful so far as it goes, of the high-minded English gentleman who divides his time between Stapleford Hall and Watcomb Park—between Nottinghamshire and Devonshire.

A river, from which the Valley of the Erewash takes its name, turgid when there has been much rain, tolerably bright under ordinary conditions, has been forced to take its course close to the house, which has a low situation. Running water, whether in the volume of a river, or in the form of a thread-like brook, always gives picturesqueness to a landscape, and the only regret with regard to the Erewash at Stapleford is that it contributes this element at a point which is rather too near the mansion. The grounds have been very much expanded by the present owner, who has taken in large pieces of what was open field beyond the boundaries of the grounds, and placed them under the hands of his gardener. They are now part of the garden, and set with a very fine collection of shrubs, chiefly of the fir kind. Colonel Wright, I may mention, is a great admirer and a successful grower of coniferæ, and has discovered that a ball shot straight from a small rifle will remove a superfluous "leader" from the summits of the tall ones, which cannot well be reached by ordinary appliances. The other portions of the garden are planted with flowers, which seem to have been chosen for the brightness and beauty of their colours. There is a still brighter collection in the spacious copper-roofed and copper-framed conservatory attached to the house, and built, I believe, necessarily at great expense, by the late Lady Warren, who formerly lived here. A broad gravel terrace runs parallel with the house, and terminates at a small group of Scotch firs, which is immediately approached by a flight of grass steps. The Stapleford mansion itself does not represent any distinct type of architecture. It has been in all probability added to and altered by successive owners. One portion of it dates back many generations, and presents the solid conventionalism which certain architects of the sixteenth century observed. The inner walls of this part of the house are almost unnecessarily substantial, and the mullioned windows, through which light is still

admitted into several of the rooms, furnish still further evidence of the antiquity of the building. The manor has been successively owned by the Stapleford, the Tevereys, and at a later period by that celebrated admiral, Sir John Borlace Warren, who performed many important services, which are fully recorded in the naval histories of the period, and who represented the borough of Nottingham in Parliament from 1796 to 1806. During the American War Sir John occupied the important post of Commander-in-Chief of her Majesty's ships on the North American station. At the close of that contest he returned to his country, and spent most of his time at Stapleford Hall, taking an active part in the magisterial business of the county. His widow resided at Stapleford until a comparatively recent date. Lady Warren died, I believe, in 1839.

There is an old picture in the possession of Colonel Wright, which contains a representation of the original proportions of Stapleford Hall. It is of large dimensions, and is evidently the work of an artist of more than average ability. Much of the canvas is occupied by sombre foliage, which might belong to any locality, but in one corner appear the conventional proportions of the old hall, and its identity is fixed more conclusively by the introduction of the river, and other features peculiar to the village. It is curious to note how love of, and aptitude in, certain accomplishments permeates certain families. I have known families, of whom each member is practically musical, if one may so speak. Several of Colonel Wright's family are painters. The Colonel himself, is or was, a not unskilful manipulator of the pencil and brush, and his two sons spend much of their time at the easel. The elder of them has reproduced very faithfully two of Niemann's landscapes, now hanging in the dining room, which represent that famous and most industrious artist in his brightest and sunniest mood, and there is more of his work in the house. There are certain rooms in the house consecrated to painting, and the younger brother is working at a drawing this morning. Perhaps they may have inherited this taste from their ancestors, for in one of the principal rooms there is a large picture of rare merit by their great-grandmother—a Mrs. Wright, of Mapperley. The subject is one which might have been chosen by Gainsborough, and in some of its aspects the picture reminds one of that master. There are others, too, of the family, in bygone generations, who painted well. That Colonel Wright is fond of good pictures there is abundant evidence within the walls of his Nottinghamshire residence. In making his art purchases he does not seem to have been actuated by a mere desire to possess. After looking at his collection, one is impressed with a notion that he has bought what most appealed to his taste and sympathies. The more valuable of his large pictures are exhibited in corners of the house, where they would hardly be seen by the casual

visitor. The brighter specimens adorn the walls of the drawing room ; others, including the two Niemanns, have taken up permanent quarters in the dining room. But the masters are not altogether excluded from the collection. Frank Hals' portrait of Vandyck, and an example of Guido, entitled "The Assumption," take their place on the same walls, with modern landscapes, seascapes, and river and mountain scenes, not the least meritorious of which are contributed by Mr. Wake, who has more than once been a guest of the genial owner of Stapleford. In the same company is to be seen the fascinating Duchess of Cleveland as Sir Peter Lely saw her, when her beauty and vivacity won for her a foremost place in the Court of the Second Charles, and there are two charming water-colours from Varley's facile brush. I believe Colonel Wright's taste runs in the direction of water-colours. From his own little room, used for the purposes of business and study, the graver work of the painter has been banished, and the walls are covered with pretty water-colours—bits by Prout, Gastineau, Bernard Evans, and half a dozen others, whose names stand high amongst the water-colourists. Several of the pictures in the dining room came from Mapperley Hall, which was built nearly a century ago by Mr. Ichabod Wright, "before I had any idea of being married," as he says in the voluminous journal he left behind him. Here are two small pictures by Von Blumen, the fine examples of Niemann already mentioned, two, of five or six, works by this great artist possessed by Colonel Wright ; a meritorious painting by Thomas Wright, a member of the family, who lived at Upton, in this county, said to have received finishing touches from the hand of Wilson ; a Clarkson Stansfield, a Canaletti, and two paintings by Bussy, representing incidents on the Field of Bosworth, which possesses local interest. These two pictures formerly formed part of a collection at Wartnaby. A representation of tree trunks, lichen—covered and knarled, bears the sign of Salvator Rosa, and at one end of the room there is a large picture by Sir William Allen, once president of the Scotch Academy—a canvas from which we learn something of the generous side of the First Napoleon's character, for the Emperor is here distributing money to helpless prisoners. Upstairs there are several interesting old paintings, which, it is fair to suppose, have been placed rather out of the way on account of their size ; partly, perhaps, because their subjects are not the most pleasant to look upon. It is pleasanter to feast one's eyes upon Niemann's grand picture, "London, from Waterloo Bridge," which hangs, in Colonel Wright's name, on the walls of the Castle Museum, at Nottingham, than to study Le Brun's canvas showing Hercules, of brawny limb, slaying the flesh-fed horses of Diomedes, which occupies the greater part of one of the upstairs corridors at Stapleford.

STOKE.

IF the artist, whose painting—a bit of Thames scenery, calm and reposeful, put the Bishop of Peterborough in such an amiable frame of mind, that a priest or a curate might play with him with impunity, were to paint a particular reach of the Trent at East Stoke that I could point out to him, he might gain a fair amount of episcopal patronage, assuming that all the Bishops are amenable to the soothing influence of skilful waterscapes, and receive the blessing of erring curates and refractory clergymen. Stoke Hall is removed from the river by a distance of park land that could almost be covered by a stone's throw, a gentle rise in the ground where it stands, being sufficient to secure immunity from the floods which rise in the neighbourhood of the Trent after protracted rains. A full view of the river can only be obtained from one or two of the upper rooms in the house, for the park is thickly studded with lofty trees—beech, elm, and horse chestnut, wide spreading and thickly foliated. There are oak trees also, but these are not remarkable for size or for luxuriance of foliage. Through the openings, however, you can discern in the sunshine quivering patches of silver, down where

The river glideth at its own sweet will.

In the fishing season when the barbel should bite, the owner of Stoke walks across the park and under the trees to the river's edge, before the dew has yet dried on the long grass, which clothes his enclosed domain. A fishing punt is moored at the water side, and into this the baronet steps, and is assisted in his exposition of the gentle art by old Tom Davis, who probably finds that baiting a hook, putting the line to rights when it has "caught" at the top of the rod, and the occasional throwing in of a plumb or a weighted float, for an indulgent master, is not quite such hard work as cricketing. Sir Henry Bromley is an inveterate fisherman. In the fall of the year he will sit in his punt all day long; facing down the river in full view of the sparkling reaches. A skilful fisherman, an excellent shot, an enthusiastic lover of cricket, a game in which some years ago he used to participate with zeal, energy, and sometimes with success; an ardent admirer of his ancestral trees and of his fine flowers, Sir Henry Bromley has abundant resources within himself, and the world without his own domain really sees but little of him.

Stoke Hall is a handsome brick building of baronial pretensions. It stands away from the river, a circumstance which may be recorded as illustrating the wisdom of its founder. It is confronted, and flanked on the one side, by as fine an expanse of park land as can well be seen in this part of England. When there have been heavy rains, the low lying portions of the park are flooded. After the waters have subsided some time elapses before the grass assumes its original brightness. The trees are abundant and lofty, and there is a row near enough to the water's edge to fling shadows upon the surface of the river. The best view of the park and grounds, a view which embraces a lovely bit of river scenery, and the elegant spire of the parish church at Newark, is to be obtained from a long asphalte walk to the right of the house, which marks the termination of the pleasure grounds. The asphalte can be walked upon with comfort in wet weather, and the overhanging trees of laburnum and hawthorne form either a graceful shade or a tolerably effectual shelter according to the humour of the elements. The Stoke laburnums are remarkably fine and very numerous. They rain their golden showers with great liberality at every turn, and outside the walls of the park, the ground is thickly strewn with their auric favours, turning to a pale brown in decay. To the right of this asphalte walk that I have mentioned is a deep gorge, which gradually shelves down to the meadows. It is pointed out as the place where the rebel army, which, in the reign of Henry VII., made an unsuccessful attempt to assert the claims of an impostor, the misguided son of an opulent baker, to the British Crown, lay concealed. It is now filled up with a thick, sturdy growth of alder and thorn, and game finds a safe retreat in its dark recesses. The blue of the germanderspeedwell and the white of stitchwort and saxifrage, give some colour to the walk, and turn one's thoughts anywhere rather than to the unhappy disturbances, which have given Stoke a place in national history. This battle, between Henry VII. and the army of the impostor Simnel, who assumed the title of the Earl of Warwick, and put forward a claim to the British Crown, is said to have been fought some little distance from where the village now stands. In writing of Stoke, one could not well omit to make some mention of the battle that was fought there, as far back as 1487. Thoroton alludes to the event in the following terms :—The army of the invader landed in company with the Earls of Lincoln and Kildare, Lord Lovel, and a German general. These were joined by a small body of English troops under command of Sir Thomas Broughton. This combined force marched towards York, while Henry was advancing to Nottingham. At this place he discovered the Earl of Lincoln's design to march to Newark-on-Trent, which he resolved to prevent, if possible. He therefore marched hastily to that place, and encamped between the enemy's army and Newark. The same day,


the Earl of Lincoln, who commanded the rebel army, advanced to Stoke, and encamped on the side of an eminence. The next day, the 6th of June, or as some say, the 16th, Henry offered him battle, his army being drawn up in three lines, the front being composed of his best troops. The battle commenced with determined vigour on both sides, and continued for three hours, without either of the armies giving way. At length, by the death of the Earls of Lincoln and Kildare, and other great officers in the rebel army, and the prodigious slaughter made amongst the German forces, the Irish and English fled from the field of battle, leaving almost 4,000 dead. This contest and victory cost the King about 3,000 slain. Simnel, we are told, spent the remainder of his days in the Royal kitchen in the capacity of a turnspit, and history relates how the remains of Lord Lovel, another of the insurgents, were found years afterwards in a vault in Oxfordshire, where he had perished, either through treachery or accident.

The entrance hall at Stoke is used as a billiard room, a very good idea on the part of the owner, for there is abundant light and plenty of space here for the practice of that excellent game. The players are overlooked by Royalty, for at one end of the room are full-length portraits of William and Mary, which, I think are credited to Kneller. There are some interesting paintings by old masters on the walls, for Stoke is rather rich in good pictures—chiefly portraits. The dining room is well stocked with them. Here one is introduced to the Queen of Bohemia, daughter of James I., and there are a dozen other celebrities of a bygone day. Vandyck is represented by Prince Rupert, Sir Peter Lely by the Duchess of York, a good example of that great artist's incomparable flesh painting, Jan Stein by Frederick, King of Bohemia, a dark, handsome monarch. The Duke of York, is here too, and that little boy with the beautiful features, over the mantelpiece, is the present baronet's father. The house, I have already stated, boasts a fine collection of portraits, the largest portion of which is to be found on the walls of the great staircase, where one can again detect the work of the masters. In the large drawing room—a fine apartment—the walls of which are covered with a pictorial paper, where oriental birds are enjoying themselves in oriental fashion, there are some handsome painted vases, which owe their beauty to Lady Bromley's skilful touch. Her ladyship has executed a quantity of this beautiful work, and the accuracy of drawing and fidelity of colouring in the flowers and other objects introduced, show proficiency in an art which is by no means easily acquired. There is another lady of artistic acquirements in the house—Mrs. Henry Bromley. The carved oak cabinet in the hall is her handiwork, and so is the oak pulpit in the adjacent church. There is some more graceful work by these ladies in the small drawing room. A splendid room is the library, with its

rows of books, and decorated ceiling. The three courtly faces within one frame at the far end, are of Charles I., in as many different aspects, and the small picture "Cleopatra," in another part of the room, is by Guido. The house has not undergone much alteration during the time it has been in the hands of the present baronet. It was thoroughly well built by its founder, and the substantial walls, close fitting double doors, with which all the principal rooms are provided, look capable of defying time. There are some twenty bed rooms over these lower apartments that I have thus briefly mentioned, and those on the north-east side command a view of the river. Sir Henry is a great grower of fruit and flowers. Under the management of a head gardener, who has been with him for a quarter of a century, his greenhouses, forcing houses, and conservatories are always filled with something beautiful, and his four acres of kitchen garden produce abundant fruit and vegetables of the finest descriptions. There are some lovely flowers in the hot houses—begonias, gloxinias, with delicate waxy throats, and a small frame of gardenias enshrines a perfume, the rush of which is almost stifling when the covering is removed. There is an ample range of glass for growing grapes, and figs are produced in a separate forcing house. You have only, as it were, to step out of the hall into the church of St. Oswald, whose square, low tower and roof were, years ago, the home of "pigeons and sparrows." It is now as bright and as cheerful a little church as any in this county. At the east end there is a coloured window, designed by Lady Bromley, and the handsome altar cloth is her ladyship's handiwork. The church contains several tablets, including one to the memory of Admiral Sir Robert Bromley, who died in 1857, and to that of Robert Bromley, his (Sir Robert's) eldest son, who once represented South Notts. in Parliament. An ancient tablet of stone says that a certain Elizabeth, wife of Richard Wightman, who died in 1696, was "full of charity to the poor," and the resting places of the first baronet, Sir George Smith, of Nottingham and Stoke Hall, who died in 1769, having enjoyed his title for twelve years, and his wife are similarly marked.

The first baronet married a granddaughter of Prince Rupert; the second, also Sir George Smith, assumed by sign manuel, the name of Bromley in 1778. Sir Henry is the second of the twelve children of the third baronet, Sir Robert Howe Bromley. He is a Magistrate and Deputy-Lieutenant for Notts., a Magistrate for Newark, and was formerly a captain in the 48th Foot.

THE PAGETS. STUFFYNWOOD.

HE Pagets—I do not mean those who have a marquiss at their head, nor the Pagets of Worcestershire, nor of Somersetshire, but those whose estates lie chiefly in Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire, and Derbyshire—are a numerous family. They belong to Leicestershire, in which county their property is principally situated, though they have acquired a landed interest in other shires, and their possessions are extensive. They have been located at Ibstock, in Leicestershire, for upwards of two centuries. I find that as far back as 1678 the Master and Brethren of Wigston's Hospital granted to Thomas Paget a lease of certain land and cottages. The present head of the family, Mr. Tertius Paget, Member of Parliament for the Southern Division of Leicestershire, has property there now. The ancestors of this gentleman, who are also the ancestors of the Nottinghamshire branches of the family, were county gentlemen of considerable position. One of them, of Ibstock, seems to have been an eminent agriculturist. Long before the days of steam ploughs and sewerage farms, he made successful experiments in scientific agriculture, and Marshall, in his survey of the Midland Counties, published many years ago, makes special mention of what he saw in the way of agricultural improvement at Ibstock. He speaks of Mr. Paget's proficiency in the art of watering grass lands on a modern principle, and adds, "He cuts a considerable quantity of hay annually from the lands which have received no other manure than the water during the last forty years." He then speaks of Mr. Paget as a representative of the highest class of yeomanry, who has made himself a master of the art, taught it to his labourers, and practised it on an extensive scale upon his own estate. Having taught the young men of his village the art of draining the land, he sent them into various districts, there to spread the system which he had found to be so profitable and so worthy of adoption. "How fortunate for rural affairs," says the surveyor of the Midlands, "when genius is assisted by science and self-practice!"

Does it not occur to those who have read the above sentences that the late Mr. Charles Paget inherited in some degree this side of his ancestor's character? The name of Paget is known in this county as well as in that of Leicester, and this must be my excuse for bringing the family into a series of articles, which indeed could hardly have been complete, did it not contain some account, however

imperfect, of a family, one of whose representatives at any rate, has done so much for Nottingham and for the county of which it is the chief town. The other members of the family who are settled about here, are Mr. Joseph Paget, of Stuffynwood ; Mr. G. Ernest Paget, of Sutton Bonnington, one of the directors of the Midland Railway Company ; Mr. William Paget, of South Field ; and Mr. Frank Paget, of Birstall—the first three of whom are magistrates for Nottinghamshire. The late Mr. Charles Paget, who lived at Ruddington Grange, was, as I have already intimated, descended from the Pagets of Ibstock. He was first returned to Parliament as Member for Nottingham in 1856, on the elevation of the late Lord Belper to the peerage, practically without opposition. At first he declined to accept the honour which was pressed upon him by some of the most influential members of the Liberal party, for a reason which indicates a certain lofty independence of character, not always to be met with in candidates for Parliamentary honours. Mr. Paget had got it into his head that some views he held concerning the Sunday Question, were distasteful to a certain section of the party whose battle he had been asked to fight, and the following extract from a letter written by Mr. Paget in 1856, to one of the leaders of the Liberal party in Nottingham, may be interesting :—

“ Since the conversation at Ruddington, in which you and Mr. Birkin (the late Ald. Birkin) enquired how, if I were in Parliament I should vote on a bill for opening places of instructive amusement, such as the British Museum and the National Gallery on the Sunday, to which enquiry I replied that I should vote in its favour, I have been honoured by a visit from Messrs. Heymann and Mundella, requesting to know if I would consent to become a candidate if the Liberal party generally wished it.

I replied that if I were called upon by the great Liberal party which supported Mr. Strutt, I should think it my duty to respond to that call, but that I would not do anything which would weaken us by dividing us.

The question upon which I differ from many of my friends amongst the Reformers appears to me to be of the highest importance.

The Sunday is an invaluable blessing to us all, particularly to the labouring man, and I cannot consent to any legislation which will prevent his using in the way he believes to be the best for his religious, moral, and intellectual improvement, that day which by universal consent Christendom has adopted as a day of religious worship and repose from labour.

On the proper mode of passing this day great difference of opinion exists, and I do not think I should be justified in endangering the Liberal representation of Nottingham on this ground.”

The difficulty, however, was not an insuperable one, and Mr. Paget was induced to come forward in the Liberal interest. Mr. Paget retained his seat as a Member for the borough for a period of ten years, and Nottingham never had a more worthy representative. He was thrown out at the election of 1865, and Parliament lost the services of one of the ablest, most respected, and most influential private members. Mr. Paget now turned his attention to matters immediately affecting the welfare of the town, obtained a seat on the first School Board, and his wide experience and sound knowledge were of great service in the working of the new Education Scheme. He was, indeed, a most valuable acquisition to the School Board, as indeed he was to every other public body with which he was connected. He continued to live a useful and active life until one day in August, 1873, when he had attained a ripe age, the waters of the deep gathered about him, as he sat upon the rocks at Filey enjoying the wild beauty of the Yorkshire coast, and he and his wife were swept away never to be heard of more.

Stuffynwood, the residence of Mr. Joseph Paget, although only four miles away from Mansfield is not in this county. It belongs to Derbyshire and is just over the border line. The division of the two counties is marked by a turbulent little stream, taking its excited course through the picturesque grounds which form an approach to the mansion, and is called the Meden. The scenery at this dividing point, if it may be so described, is exquisitely pretty—might fairly be called romantic, for it reminds one of the softer aspects of the Peak of Derbyshire. The stream has not the width of the Dove, but it has some of its graceful curves and sparkling eddies, and it threads its way along a ravine, which is sheltered by masses of limestone rock of picturesque formation, and by overhanging foliage. The name "Little Matlock" has been given to it. The house which has the advantage of an elevated situation commanding extensive views in both counties, is a large, handsome building, of fine architectural proportions, and a conspicuous object from certain quarters, though as it is away from the population—its name does not stand for any parish or village—it is not much known. It was built by Mr. Charles Paget upwards of twenty years ago, and as its substantial walls are composed of the hard magnesian limestone so abundant in the neighbourhood, it is likely that it will last for many generations.

Living at Stuffynwood, a drive of a few miles brings you in the midst of all the glories of Sherwood Forest ; in another direction you may soon get amongst some of the scenery for which the adjoining county is so famous. On clear days, Mr. Paget, by an instantaneous process, takes photographs of the surrounding scenery from his grounds. From his dining room window you may see the

trains passing along the Manchester, Sheffield, and Lincolnshire line, giving life to the landscape, and these with the smoke outpouring from the funnel of the engine as the train rushes along, he has photographed successfully. The large and well-lighted rooms, decorated with quiet taste and furnished in a befitting manner, without any appearance of display, contain many beautiful things. In the hall there are curious cabinets and quaint pieces of furniture which once belonged to a Roman noble, and are, I should think, very valuable. One of the cabinets is said to have been designed by Michael Angelo; the other pieces are curiously inlaid, and quaint illustrations of proverbs and episodes in sacred and profane history are introduced to form part of the work. A fine picture of Gilbert's hangs in the hall, and faces the entrance. It is a Scotch landscape, suffused with the light of an evening sun. A dusky haze is gathering over a reedy lake from which the wild fowl are rising—a picture that would always arrest one's attention. The principal pictures, I gathered, were mostly chosen by the late Mr. Charles Paget, who had rare taste in matters of art. If the pictures at Stuffynwood are not numerous they are all of them good, and they would brighten any room in which they were hung. The room of an indiscriminate collector of pictures—I mean of a man who makes a practice of buying the works of great artists whenever they are offered to him, and who cares more for the autograph of the painter than for the subject or character of the painting, are sometimes the very reverse of cheerful. But the incongruity of arrangement to which I allude is only to be observed in houses where works of art are got together, either from a love of possession or to gratify a mania for collection. The owner of Stuffynwood is not an art collector in the accepted sense of that term, but he would be justified in pointing with some degree of pride to the few works of the painters' and sculptors' art which his house enshrines.


In the dining room, over the mantelpiece, there is a large Scriptural painting—an Old Testament subject—showing all the soft beauty of an Eastern landscape, by Marco, a Hungarian painter of considerable repute. It represents the meeting of Laban and Jacob, and it is flanked on either side by an example of Herring's exquisite art, full of bright, transparent light and of atmospheric vitality. On the opposite wall there are some half-dozen portraits, two of them at once recognisable. These are of the much lamented and much missed public man, whose name will ever occupy a prominent place in local history, and of his son who inherited his estates, and who is the present owner of Stuffynwood and Ruddington Grange. The ceiling in the drawing room is ornamented with a very fine centre piece. It is a reproduction of one of the masterpieces of Guido, and was painted by Italians. On the walls of this room are a number of fine water colours, chiefly of the scenery of Italy.

One of them is the *Largo di Gardo*, by Vandervelde, formerly Geographer Royal to the King of Holland, and who made the first famous map of the Holy Land. In recesses at opposite sides of the large window, are two chaste pieces of white marble statuary—*Pastorella*, from the chisel of Wolff, and *Cupid*, disguised as a shepherd, designed by Gibson, and executed by one of his pupils. There is a finer piece of statuary than either of these, in the library upstairs. This is Benzoni's "*Diana*," a lovely figure, which the sculptor executed as a commission for the late Emperor of Russia, at the time of the Crimean War. The statue was not, however, destined to adorn the Imperial Palace. His Majesty was probably too much occupied with the disastrous event in which his country was involved, to indulge in art cravings, and the statue remained in Rome until it was seen by the late Mr. Charles Paget, who purchased it and sent it to England. It now graces the library of an English country gentleman, and is safe from dynamite and the machinations of Nihilism. But the effect of this beautiful figure would hardly have been lost among the splendours of the home of Russian Royalty. It is of more than life size; the superb goddess holds in her shapely fingers an arrow which she has just taken from the quiver; the head is slightly towards the exquisite shoulders, showing a clear cut and perfect profile, when the statue is moved in the certain position; the drapery is backward-fluttering, and one delicate foot is lifted, suggesting progression and swift movement. It is beautiful as an ornament, perfect as a work of art, and not easily to be forgotten by one who has had an opportunity of studying it for any length of time.

Almost every good country house has a billiard room. Billiards is a game which never loses its fascination, and in these country houses the room where the board of green cloth is set, is frequently used. The game is generally played under the most favourable and favoured conditions. The board is of the very best make, the cushions are kept in perfect order, the cues carefully selected, and of the best description, and the room very comfortable. The billiard room at Stuffynwood is just what a private billiard room ought to be. It is detached from the other principal rooms in the house, but is quite easy of access. It is lofty, and is well lighted both by windows and by a skylight arrangement of diaphanous glass, which modifies the effect of the sun's rays when that orb is shining. The progress of the game is marked by electricity; by touching one of the nipples set in the polished ledge on every side of the board, the players register their strokes upon a figured disc without any further trouble. If this arrangement is generally adopted, billiard marking may possibly become an obsolete calling. If my visit had happened earlier in the year, I might have had a better chance of seeing the gardens and the beautiful things in the

way of orchids and other showy exotics that are grown in the extensive ranges of glass that are attached to the gardens, which cover a large area of ground. These visits are much pleasanter in summer—they are made pleasant in the winter by the unvarying kindness which is shown to me by the heads of the various families representing the great houses of this county, but after spending several hours amid internal comforts, such as are alone to be met with in residences of this class, on a cold and boisterous day, one is not anxious to pass much time in flowerless gardens and leafless pleasure grounds.

THORESBY.

HE Duke of Westminster, during a visit to Lord Manvers at Thoresby Park, was surprised to find one of the grandest houses in England in the midst of a forest, where "Norman kings once hunted, and Saxon outlaws plundered." Vast and ornate, Thoresby stands in the heart of a forest, which the axe and the plough have not yet invaded ; a palatial residence, far removed from busy scenes. Thoresby, beyond a doubt, is one of the stateliest of the many noblemen's mansions, which are scattered over this island ; it would be the fitting habitation of Royalty, and its situation gives it an advantage and a charm, which scarcely any other residence in the country possesses. In 1745, the Duke of Kingston's residence, at Thoresby, was destroyed by fire, and but very little was saved from the wreck. In its place, the second, and last, Duke of Kingston built a house of considerable magnificence at the foot of a beautiful grove of Spanish chestnuts, set in regular array, which are now flourishing in the same soft turf, and in the same fertile soil which nurtured them then. This house, having served as the family residence for two generations, was rased to the ground by the present Earl Manvers, and further away from the Chestnut Grove, and the little stream, which carries away the overflow from a broad and pellucid lake, his lordship caused to be built the present magnificent mansion. In a short article it would be impossible to present anything like an adequate description of Thoresby, and even given the command of unlimited columnial space, I could not hope to furnish a satisfactory detailed account of Earl Manvers' princely residence. Outside, one is struck by the imposing look of the place, with its massive stonework, moulded windows, and tooled quoins and dressings. Inside, one is dazzled by much magnificence, and one leaves the house with confused memories of satin-covered walls, tapestry curtains, statutory mantelpieces, and gilded ceilings. To give some idea of the size of this great house, which is the boast of the north of the county, it may be stated here that the main fronts measure 180 feet on the east and principal entrance, and 159 on the west, and 182 on the south. Thoresby, though it does not strictly come in the category of "show places," is yet, so to speak, open to the public, for when the family is away in London, or elsewhere—and their absence usually extends over several months in each year

—parties of pleasure-takers and tourists are allowed to see the house. Lord Manvers does not believe in that exclusiveness, which shuts the doors of some of these private places against those who know how to appreciate the beautiful objects they enshrine. By reason of Lord Manvers' liberality, the splendours of Thoresby are pretty widely known, in this county, at any rate. The central hall, for instance, has been admired by scores of tourists, as the visitors' book on the table there, containing many familiar names, will tell. Its stone walls are as white as when the material of which they are composed was first smoothed, and from the hammer-beam roof to the floor of patterned oak, it has a look of imposing newness. All the oak in the room, and there is a great deal of it, was grown in the adjoining forest. The stone arches, which support the music gallery at one end, are perpetuated on the wall behind, where brightly burnished bayonets are arranged in arch form. At the other end of the hall, which is sixty-five feet long, stand two grim-looking suits of armour, which, placed in an upright position, surmounted with visors, and possessed each with a sword, look like ghostly knights of old. Other portions of the wall are occupied by weapons of curious shape, arranged in graceful devices. There are some family pictures here, including the second Duke of Kingston, on whose death that dukedom became extinct. The last duke's only sister, Lady Francis Pierrepont, who married, in 1734, Mr. Philip Meadows, the son of Sir Philip of that name, is not far removed from her brother on these walls. There is also a large oil painting of Lady Manvers' great-grandfather, Francois de Franquetot, Duc de Coigny, representing this distinguished French nobleman on horseback. The large picture over the handsome chimneypiece is evidently by some well known artist, but I am wholly unacquainted with the three wigged figures—presumably persons of high rank—who are engaged in amicable converse over some rare golden wine, supplied from a flask which stands on the table. Another portrait worth noticing is that of the celebrated Lady Wortley Montague, the eldest daughter of the first Duke of Kingston. This remarkable lady was born as Thoresby. The dining room at Thoresby contains some choice modern pictures, which have been chosen with much good taste. It is a beautiful room, with doors and panels of polished walnut, and a fine ceiling, the upper part of the room being surrounded by a deep and beautiful frieze. The large sideboard looks like a piece of foreign furniture, whilst the two smaller ones are the work of a local carver. On these walls hang portraits of the Earl and Countess Manvers, the former in his uniform of Colonel of the South Notts. Yeomanry ; her ladyship, in a dress of white satin, a small vase of flowers occupying her attention. Both are unmistakeably good likenesses. The other portraits in the dining room are of the fifth Earl,

afterwards Marquis of Dorchester, and first Duke of Kingston, who died in 1725 ; of the Duchess, his second wife ; and of Lady Isabella Bentinck, daughter of the Earl of Portland, all fine specimens of portrait painting. If one were asked to make a choice from the half-dozen large modern paintings in this dining room—they are all good and carefully selected—I think it would fall upon that by Creswick, who, notwithstanding the fault that has sometimes been attributed to him, that of giving too much effect to the coldness of our northern atmosphere, occupies a leading place amongst modern landscape painters. The sheep form the prominent feature of this picture, and there is a wooliness about them, and a life in the shepherd dog, which strike one as much as the fine atmospheric effect in the background, and the faithful rendering of the tall trees. Vicat Cole's picture of a mill, with the translucent water and reedy detail, which was painted as late as 1872, arrests one's attention, and is one of that painter's best efforts. It is evening, and the sky has that purple tone, which one sometimes sees at the close of a summer day. There is a large painting of the " Old Steps at Margate," with a warm sunlight on the rocks, and a restless sea. There is some very skilful management of colour in Milbye's picture of a Spanish vessel at sea ; a deep purple glow is upon the waves, and over the whole scene is the glamour of sunset. To get to the library you have to pass through a small drawing room, with curtains of rare Gobelin tapestry, and great doors of polished maple of the American and British varieties. The library is large and quiet ; the stillness of that large, bright room, with its rows of handsomely bound volumes of English, foreign, and classic literature is unbroken by the faintest sound. The most noticeable object here is the chimneypiece, which is a piece of elaborate and beautiful carving, displaying remarkable artistic skill ; one can scarcely imagine that the material from which it is wrought once grew on the estate. Almost every knot in the venerable Major Oak is here produced in miniature, and in kindred substance ; there is a herd of deer, and the spreading fronds of forest fern, the piece being supported on either side the fire place by statuettes of Robin Hood and Little John, the whole oak-covered. This piece of work, is about fifteen feet high, and ten feet wide. Above the bookcases are ranged portraits of kings, queens, and nobles. There are the Dukes of York and Gloucester, and Charles II., by Nason, a Dutch artist who visited England in the reign of the Second Charles ; Prince George, of Denmark, by Verlest, whose arrogance lost him the patronage of Lord Chancellor Shaftesbury ; of Queen Anne, and George the Third, and of Mary, the last painted by Godfrey Kneller ; of William III., from the brush of Wyck, and some family portraits by eminent artists. The ceiling of this room, is like that of the other

principal rooms, highly ornamented. The floor is of oak with parquetric bordering. The drawing room is a very handsome apartment. The crystal pendants of the massive chandeliers hang from a rich coffered ceiling, ornamented with pink and blue, and gold, sparkle in the light. The walls, to the length of fifty-three feet—that is the length of the room, are covered with blue satin, with graceful floral figurings of silver grey, and the curtains are of tapestry. With the same costly fabric much of the furniture is covered, whilst other of the gilded pieces are draped with worked silk of splendid texture, or with the richest velvet. The mantelpieces are of statuary marble, snow-white. Everywhere appears rare ornaments ; on the mantelpieces there are some fine specimens of Sevres china, and at the end of the room there is a massive vase, mounted on a handsome pedestal, which was presented to Lady Manvers by the Empress Eugenie, in 1854. There are ornamental timepieces encased in rare china—and in the recesses are brazen Cupids, making vain attempts to fly away with brackets, on which are some dozen candle holders. Satin wood, bird's eye, and foreign maple, walnut wood, and oak have been employed in forming the more substantial fittings of the drawing room, and the carpet is of the choicest Indian manufacture.

It seems that at Thoresby, art has exhausted its invention, and that wealth has offered all its resources. In every part of the house the same aspect of completeness and magnificence is apparent. There are over a hundred bed rooms in the building, and the principal of these are furnished with dressing rooms of the size of an ordinary sleeping apartment. From the windows of some of these rooms there are lovely views. Away in the distance you can see clusters of great forest trees. To the right, the silvery surface of a great lake, which covers sixty-five acres, shows itself, and nearer still, the foam of a turbulent little waterfall catches the eye, whilst beyond the beautifully kept gardens, and the great broad terrace, is the park and forest, with its numerous herd of deer. In traversing the landings, one comes upon occasional specimens of tapestry, and there are one or two large pictures commemorating French martial events, in which Lady Manvers' ancestors played a leading part. The walls of the Countess' boudoir are pannelled with rich Aubisson tapestry, and the curtains are in part composed of the same rare fabric. The mantelpiece is of white marble, a treasure which has been transplanted from some Italian palace. There are three carved figures of Cupid on each side, each figure holding shell-fish, or fruit in the hand. The chairs and other articles of furniture are covered with worked silk and tapestry. One side is occupied by a low book case, containing a small collection of good standard literature. When her ladyship is not here, writing letters and reading, in all probability she will be interesting herself in the

welfare of some of the children who attend the little school at Perlethorpe. Lady Manvers, it may be here mentioned, is the second daughter of the Duc de Coigny, of France, and sister to the Countess of Stair. She was married to Earl Manvers in 1852, eight years before he succeeded to the earldom.

Thoresby Park covers about 2,000 acres and is some ten miles in circumference. The estate embraces a vast tract of forest land studded in some places with mighty and vigorous oaks, in others with graceful beeches, and the Spanish chestnut with its bosses of prickly husks flourishes in the fertile forest soil. The wide-spreading, undulating ground is covered, far as the eye can range, with a sturdy undergrowth of fern, which, in the fall of the year, becomes golden or reddish brown. There is every combination and variety of woodland scenery here, and it is as still in these sylvan wilds as in any primeval forest. This surely was the very forest where the day-dreams of Coningsby, on his way to Nottingham, were put an end to by a storm which made the oaks and beeches express their terror or their agony. The pleasure grounds of Thoresby are severed from the forest by a sunken fence, which is a sure protection against the inroads of cattle or deer. They are thickly studded with tall vigorous trees, and intersected by a shallow stream, which after making a foamy waterfall, calms itself in a smoother bed, and so pursues its way. The broad and clear lake which extends into the forest as far as one can see, is fed by the Medin. The pike and the perch thrive in its deep waters, and the coot rears her young in the thick growth which fringes its margin. Outside the pale of the pleasure grounds are the workshops, wood-yard, and gas works, which are ever busy, and they are large enough to do the work of a small town. The machine shops contain the best inventions in the way of machinery, and the works regularly employ a number of hands. There are circular saws and hand saws, and upon the floor are piles of oak and ash, which will be drilled and grooved for all manner of purposes on the estate. The most skilled workmen are employed here; joiners, sawyers, and machinists, and if one did not know that the whole of Lord Manvers' large estates were supplied from these workshops, one would be at a loss to know what was done with all this wood-work which keeps a powerful engine perpetually on the move. The clerk of the works has his permanent office here, and everything is done in the most systematic and regular manner. The gas works are close by, and here there are two gasometers, retorts, and all the requisite appliances for making sufficient gas to supply the hall, the church, and other places. All this in the heart of a forest where "Norman kings once hunted and Saxon outlaws plundered."

THRUMPTON HALL.

THRUMPTON Hall was built two hundred and fifty years ago by the Pigots who were then among the county magnates. Old country houses, whether of brick or of stone, are always interesting ; it is only to be regretted that there are so few of them hereabouts. If of brick, they acquire a soft, quiet tint in old age, which does not in any way owe its existence to the prevalence of smoke, but which comes of long exposure to the sun, and to the fresh, sweet air. Thrumpton Hall is a brick building, and its outer walls have got this beautiful colour of which I speak. When the trees are in full leaf the house is by no means a conspicuous object from any point of view, and it is, perhaps, one of the few great houses near at hand, with whose proportions large numbers of people living in the county town are not familiar. Those who have only seen the house from the river, whose swift current flows a few hundred yards in front of it, or from the towing path, can form no adequate idea of its dimensions, or of its architectural character. It does not show its best side to the gaze of those who happen to be walking along the river side, or to the fishermen who try their luck in the Thrumpton waters. To get a really good view of the house you must go into the grounds, which, by the way, are not show grounds, but strictly private gardens, and there you may see the gabled front with its peculiar stone mouldings, and the square, heavy framed windows, which are a distinguishing mark of the architecture of James the First's reign. The house is undoubtedly one of very handsome proportions, and when the sun is out, you appreciate all the more those rich brick-tints of which I have spoken. While in the grounds one is bound to take some notice of the trees, which are very fine. There are two magnificent specimens of the larch, tall, wide-spreading, and elegant. In winter, the ground beneath them is completely covered with the small needle-shaped foliage, which is pleasant to walk upon. These trees were planted upwards of a century ago, and they are said to be the finest of the kind in the county. Then there is a great cedar, which was planted in commemoration of some event when George the Third was king, and a set of glorious elms, which flourished as saplings three hundred years ago. So that there is some interesting timber within the Thrumpton domain, for several of these venerable trees have a history of their own. Near the house, and in front of the terrace, is a backwater,

made from the overflow of the adjacent river, and to this retreat wild fowl come and establish a right of residence, living on good terms with their more domesticated kindred. Beyond is the river, which in flood-times becomes a nuisance to the village, though the inhabitants do not suffer so much personal inconvenience as those of other river side parts of the county.

The mansion is on the site of an older house, which was occupied by the Putrels, and it was built, as I have said, by the Pigot family, who lived in it for several generations, and were at one time, people of considerable distinction. In 1669, in the reign of Charles the Second, Mr. Gervase Pigot, of Thrumpton, was High Sheriff of the County, and he is said by Thoroton to have been a person of great parts, both natural and acquired, and the historian adds, "for sobriety, ingenuity, generosity, piety, and other virtues, few of his rank will ever exceed, if any equal him." It would perhaps be appropriate to mention here a fact that was told to me the other day. It was at Thrumpton Hall that Thoroton made up his mind to write that very interesting and very valuable history of Nottinghamshire which is known so well. Dugdale, the Warwickshire historian, and Thoroton were guests in the house at the same time, and the former suggested to the latter that he should write a history of this county. The suggestion was, in all probability, encouraged by Mr. Pigot, who was a man of considerable attainments, and who would, no doubt, urge Thoroton to the task, a similar one to which had been so successfully undertaken by his other guest, for another midland county. Whilst Mr. Pigot was High Sheriff of this county in 1638, the wife of Sir Francis Burdett's eldest son died, and the Sheriff adopted black liveries and silver trimmings for his javelin men. Shortly after the Assizes he died, and the men who attended him when he received the judge, carried him to the grave in those same liveries which they had worn on a melancholy occasion a few days previously. Mr. Pigot's executors in the year above mentioned sold the manor to Mr. John Emmerton, of the Middle Temple, who bequeathed them to John Emmerton Wescomb Emmerton, the eldest son of a nephew. The estate is now in the hands of Lady Byron, a daughter of Rev. William Wescomb, an Essex clergyman, who married firstly the Hon. Captain Byron, afterwards eighth Lord Byron; and recently Rev. Philip Douglas, rector of Thrumpton, who now resides at the hall. Her ladyship has been a true friend to Thrumpton. Some years ago she restored the church at a cost of several thousand pounds. She has also caused to be erected an excellent set of schools, and has built two additional farm houses on the estate.

The most conspicuous feature in the interior of Thrumpton Hall is a superb staircase. It is of wood, massive, and elaborately

carved, leading from the basement storey to a suite of upper rooms. It was placed in the house sometime about 1660 by the Pigots, whose coat of arms it bears. Upon the original bearings of that family three pickaxes appeared, these devices having probably been suggested by the surname of the lord of the manor, though the connection is somewhat vague. It was afterwards discovered that the family was entitled to another coat of arms, so that two shields are part of the carving on the staircase, the second displaying a greyhound in a couchant position with a collar about his neck. The staircase is unique of its class, and is perhaps the finest example of this kind of decoration in the county. Its effect is, however, somewhat lost on account of the position in which it is placed. It does not rise immediately from the hall, as some grand staircases do ; it is, in fact, hidden from the view of the casual visitor, who, if he were only admitted to the principal rooms of the house, would not know that such a rare and useful piece of ornamentation existed. A large room in the upper part of the house was formerly used for reception purposes, and probably the staircase may have been devised as a means of communication with that apartment. The house is full of woodwork. The walls of most of the principal rooms are protected by it, and its colour and condition have been preserved through time, for it is fair to presume that the woodwork in the rooms is as old as that of the staircase.

Knowing that the late Lord Byron, who made this fine old house his residence for a time, was a lineal descendant of the illustrious author of "Childe Harold," I asked if the hall contained anything which would remind one of the poet. I was informed that it did not ; that such of the Byron relics as are not at Newstead were in the possession of the present peer. There are, however, some very interesting things in the house. Among the pictures I noticed several good portraits on the walls of the dining room, among them one of that distinguished naval officer, General Monk, afterwards Duke of Albemarle, who, sooner than allow any foreign fleet to dispute the British sovereignty of the seas, would have fired his pistol into the powder magazine and blown the British navy into smithereens. His presence on these walls is accounted for by the fact that he and Sir William Marshall were great friends ; and Sir William, whose portrait hangs on the same walls, was connected with Lady Byron's family by ties of relationship. In this distinguished company, which includes Sir William Marshall's two wives, is a Miss Appleton, one of the ladies-in-waiting to Queen Anne, who presented her with a set of gold plate, which is still in the possession of Lady Byron. There are several portraits on the staircase ; one of them a stern-visaged warrior of solid proportions, very likely the sturdy Protector, who, it is known, issued a writ requiring the attendance of Gervase Pigot, of Thrumpton, at Westminster, on the 4th of July, 1653, as Member for the county of Nottingham.

The Library contains a rare collection of books, some of which are very valuable. The shelves are rich in county histories, a kind of literature which is much in demand just now, amongst them "Bloomfield's Norfolk," "Omerod's Cheshire," and "Nicholls' Leicestershire." There are splendid editions of the works of the great French and German writers, and complete sets of the classics, all these being arranged in perfect order. Whilst here I had an opportunity of glancing through a small, thin volume in old fashioned print, which has a local bearing. It was written a long while ago by Sir Thomas Parkyns, of Bunny Park, in this county. It is entitled "The In play, or Cornish-Hug Wrestler," and it claims to be a digest of the method which teaches how to throw an opponent on the most approved principles. "It is easy to be understood," the title page announces, "by all gentlemen and by all tradesmen," presuming they have some previous knowledge of the rudiments of the art which its mission is to teach. The book, if I remember rightly, is dedicated to his Majesty George II., and on the frontispiece there is a rude engraving of the titled author in a wrestling attitude, after the fashion of the well known monument in Bunny Church. In a small recess above the mantelpiece there is a queer figure of the statuette order—a piece of antique sculpture representing an inebriated Bacchus, which was brought by the late Mr. Wescomb from Italy, and is said to be very valuable. In the small, bright drawing room, there is a cabinet containing a choice collection of china, in which I noticed some rare pieces of Sevres, Dresden, and Lowestoft, and a number of other interesting objects which one has not time to linger over. Not long ago a curiosity was unearthed by some member of the household, in the shape of a richly brocaded dress, which was discovered in an old trunk, along with a Nottingham newspaper, published sometime in 1749.

THURGARTON PRIORY.

Thurgarton Priory retains its monastic title, but there is very little else to remind one of its early history. For many years, I do not know exactly how many, it has been the residence of a succession of country gentlemen who have furnished its bright and ample rooms with taste, and perhaps with a certain luxuriousness, and have enjoyed the pleasantest side of village life, in the retirement of a small, but picturesque, park, whose gates open from the road. But the Priory, though it is in the village, possesses a seclusion as complete as if it were further removed from the quiet cottage life of a rustic hamlet. It is guarded by big trees, and the rising character of the ground helps to keep it private. If the canons of Thurgarton selected this admirable site for the original Priory, it is possible that they may have had something more in view than that privacy which was considered necessary for the proper performance of the monkish ceremonies. For those old cenobites who held Thurgarton, knew how to look after their own interests, and they perhaps had their house in this particular locality in order that they might have direct and immediate control over their dues. In the twelfth century, when Thurgarton Priory was founded, strange customs prevailed in some of these out-of-the-way places. Let the dwellers by the side of the brook which runs through Thurgarton to-day, who are inclined to grumble when the water gets into their small cottages at flood times, reflect upon the calls that were made upon their rural ancestors, of the dues that were filched from their scanty and hardly-won stores—of the extraordinary tithe that was exacted from their small belongings by those cowed vampires who held the Priory in the reign of the First Henry, and plundered the villagers in the name of their tutelar saint. Listen, ye damsels who hope to be led to the village altar, and to become the hard-working wives of hard-working husbands, to the tale of extortion which the history of those dark times furnishes in connection with that bright village of Thurgarton, through which the brook ripples pleasantly, and in whose centre the leaves of the horse chestnuts “spread into a perfect fan.” When these holy friars held Thurgarton, a female inhabitant who took a husband, or who sinned, had to give to the monks a fee of 5s. 4d., or half that amount, according to her quality, “for the redemption of her blood.” In the one case the fee stamped the union as felicitous; in the other, a so-called religion profited through the medium of sin and shame. But this is not the only interesting custom which was enforced by the holy brotherhood

who lived at the Priory, and the Thurgarton tenants of that day may be forgiven if they grumbled at the demands that were made upon them. Not only were these worthy husbandmen contemptuously described as villains, but they were expected to contribute in kind to the Christmas feast at the Priory. Nor does this represent the despotism to which the unfortunate Thurgartonianians were subjected by these grasping friars. They were compelled to put into the Abbot's fold, all the sheep they had in their possession or custody during the winter, except their own, and if any were sold they had to make good the number in order that my lord Abbot's fold might not lose anything. This abominable system of extortion was carried to a still lower and more miserable level, for it is on record that the Thurgarton tenants were compelled to house and feed their sheep in the Abbot's fold during the winter months, in order that the monastic dunghill might be enriched, and if a cottager sold one of the folded sheep to pay his rent, or to get food for his household, he had to procure another, by fair means or foul, in order that the Abbot's supply of manure might not be permitted to dwindle. From these historical facts, it will be gathered that village life, as far back as the period to which such facts refer, had its drawbacks, and the occupiers of land and cottages of to-day will hardly be reluctant to admit that it is better to bear the tightness which comes of agricultural depression, than to live under the control of an arbitrary and exacting brotherhood, who practiced despotism in the name of religion.

Thurgarton Priory was founded in 1130, in the reign of Henry the First, by Ralph de Ayncourt, at the request of Thurstan, Archbishop of York. It was built for the accommodation of canons of the order of St. Augustine, dedicated to St. Peter, and was endowed with all Thurgarton and Fiskerton. The resources of the Priory were supplemented in the succeeding reign by additional grants of land, and the Sheriff of Nottingham was commanded by the reigning monarch to see that the canons of Thurgarton held their mills on the river Trent "peaceably and without let or molestation from the men of the See of Durham." Other kings granted additional property and privileges to these Thurgarton monks, who seem to have been able to possess themselves of whatever took their fancy in the neighbourhood. The head of their order claimed a seat of honour in the church at Southwell, above the heads of all others, and the Priory acquired a territorial consequence and a monastic power which were known throughout the length and breadth of the county.

In 1537, Thurgarton Priory ceased to exist as a religious institution. It was then valued at £259 per annum, and was granted, with appurtenances and other hereditaments, to William Cooper, one of a Derbyshire family, who was, or had been, in the service of the King, Henry the Eighth, and to his heirs. From these descended

Sir Roger Cooper, who played a prominent part in the wars of Charles the First's time, espousing the interest of the King, and swearing lasting allegiance to his Sovereign. Like other rash enthusiasts of the time, he spent his patrimony, not in riotous living, but in the service of the King, and so ruined the prospects and fortunes of his family, which at one time was of leading consequence in this county. However, his descendant was made carver to his Majesty, and receiver of certain royal dues in recognition of the services rendered by the family to the King's cause. From this family descended Colonel Cooper-Gardner, who died in 1832, shortly after the close of the first election under the provisions of the Reform Act, on which occasion he was a candidate for the northern division of the county. At the time of the dissolution of the monasteries, the rectory of Thurgarton, together with a considerable portion of the village, was granted to Trinity College, Cambridge, then a new foundation. In 1794, this land was sold to Sir Richard Sutton, Bart., of Norwood Park.

The present house was built by Mr. John Gilbert Cooper, who pulled down the old Priory, leaving the crypt to remind the occupant or the visitor of the original character of the building. This remnant of monastic accommodation remains to the present day, and forms part of the cellarage of the house. The arched ceiling is in a good state of preservation, and may endure for generations yet to come; the stones underfoot, under which, perhaps, lie buried the dust of those old Abbots to whose larder the cottagers carried their poultry to make a feast, are worn and broken. But in most respects the crypt is tolerably perfect, and it will remain hereafter to identify the building as belonging to a limited number of houses in the country, which served as religious institutions until Henry VIII. took it into his head to abolish the monasteries. Of late years, Thurgarton Priory has been known as the residence of Mr. Richard Milward, who died in 1879, and to whose memory a fine stained-glass window has been placed in the old church. It is now tenanted by Mr. J. B. Barrow, formerly of Ringwood Hall, near Chesterfield.

WALLINGWELLS.

TO an edition of "Thoroton's Nottinghamshire," which rests on the shelves of the library at Wallingwells, a painstaking member of the family residing there, has, at some time or another, made certain valuable additions in manuscript. These are extracts and compilations from deeds and other documents in Sir Thomas White's possession, and consequently the information they contain may be described as exclusive. Turning over the closely-written leaves, which have made this particular copy of the local historian precious, I came across the following interesting extract :—

"In the house (Wallingwells) were nine persons besides the prioress, all of good life and conversation, who desire to continue religious ; the house well reputed, and good hospitality there daily kept. The moveable goods worth £52 3s. 8½d. ; no debts owing to the house." Some of these characteristics, described as they are, with an almost pathetic exactness, the modern house at Wallingwells still retains ; the others belongs to a past, which is ever becoming more remote. The house is still "well reputed." It is occupied by a family, whose connection with the county is of centuries long duration, and whose representatives have always been intimately associated with the administration of its affairs. It was the first titled owner of Wallingwells, who, a generation ago, in view of an invasion of these shores, voluntarily sustained the cost of the formation and maintenance of an entire volunteer force, and who firmly declined to accept a portion of this self-imposed expense from those who were perhaps better able, and who were certainly willing to bear it. His immediate successor, who has now reached the advanced age of eighty, was brought up to the profession of arms. In Nottinghamshire he was known as an ardent politician, who consistently supported the Conservative cause, as an active magistrate, and a considerate landlord. Ten years ago an untoward accident deprived Sir Thomas White of one of his limbs, and the county of the active services of one of the most influential of its magnates, but under the rule of a high-minded, warm-hearted, and intelligent owner, who lives amongst his people, Wallingwells has sustained that "good repute," which seems to have attached to it when its floors were softly trodden by the feet of holy women. But it has lost its monastic character ; there are scarcely any remaining evidences of the "good life and conversation," to which its earlier

inhabitants were pledged, and the value of its "moveable goods" has increased to meet the requirements of one of the leading county families. The antiquity of Wallingwells is fully established by historic testimony, and there exists no doubt as to the purposes to which it was originally devoted. It was formerly part of the manor and parish of Carlton-in-Lindrick, until, in the reign of Stephen, a certain knight, by name Ralph de Cheurolcourt, granted "to Almighty God and the Virgin St. Mary a place in his park at Carlton-by-the-Wells, to make and build there an habitation for holy religion, so free that this place shall not depend on or belong to any other place." In conformity with the conditions of Sir Ralph's generous grant, a Benedictine Nunnery was built here, and, so far as can be ascertained, the only breach of the conditions laid down by the worthy knight, was in the naming of the place, which was called Waldon-de-Wells, from its situation among "wells, fountains, and streams," and from which its present nomenclature has been derived. It is more than probable that for a very considerable period Wallingwells, to adopt its most modern name, was a small centre of religious asceticism, for there is evidence that it was used as a priory many years after its foundation. Not more than fifty years ago, whilst some excavations were being made near the house, several stone coffins were brought to light, in one of which were the ashes of a prioress, who governed the nunnery in the reign of the First Richard, were found, together with a silver chalice, which, it is supposed, had been placed in the hands of the deceased Superior. The whole of these coffins were re-interred, probably to remain hidden from view for another six hundred years. In the reign of Elizabeth, we find Wallingwells in the joint possession of a leather seller and a grocer, who probably respectively made her Majesty's boots, and supplied the Royal table with small commodities. The heirs of the leather seller made it the family residence, until the reign of Charles II., when it was sold to a Major Taylor, who had been Governor of Tangier, and this family held it until it came into the possession of the Whites.

Thomas White, of Tuxford, who lived some two hundred years ago, was a lucky man. He was out hunting one day, and, as many a follower of the chase has done, both before and since, he lost his way. The day waned; twilight deepened into dark, and a propitious fate or a distant light, led Thomas White's jaded horse, and his probably equally exhausted and disconsolate rider to the friendly portals of Wallingwells. At that time the house was occupied by Miss Bridget Taylor, who, besides being a great heiress, was a lady, whose personal charms, if they are fairly represented on the canvas, which I saw on Sir Thomas White's walls, were pronounced. Mr. White found shelter and a wife; he, a gentleman

of good family and considerable standing in the county, married the heiress of Wallingwells as a result of that accidental visit. But for an incident equally strange, though perhaps less romantic, an account of which I had from Sir Thomas White's own lips, the family honours, which were bestowed upon a lineal descendant of the country gentleman who wooed and won the heiress, would probably have passed in another direction. Sir Thomas, when a boy, was with his father at Scarborough, taking part in a sport, of which the first baronet was a leading patron—hawking. Wandering by the sea-shore, with a hawk fastened to his wrist, the heir to the title and estates of the Whites was overtaken by the tide, and washed out to sea some considerable distance. The hawk having, like Stephano, a very distinct aversion to water, made such vigorous use of its powerful wings, that it dragged the drowning boy to shore, and saved his life. There is no connection between these two incidents, but each of them is extraordinary in its way, and each is in a manner associated with the history of Wallingwells, and the fortunes of its lords. The first serves to show how the Wallingwell's property came into the hands of the Whites, who formerly resided at Tuxford, the manorial rights of which place were purchased by one of the family, in 1545. The purchaser of this estate married a sister of Lord Burleigh, Lord High Treasurer of England, and was succeeded by his son, Sir John White, Knight, who was Sheriff of Nottinghamshire in the reign of King James I. The successors of this gentleman were Members of Parliament for Retford, from 1678 downwards, and one of them is mentioned by Walpole "as an old Republican who governed both Newcastle and Lord John Cavendish."

I suppose the original priory was a much less pretentious building than that which now adorns this broad and beautiful bit of north Nottinghamshire and Yorkshire landscape. The old nunnery was never destroyed, and some of its walls still remain to form part of the present house. It overlooks a fine piece of park land, remarkable for charm of foliage and variety of aspect, and much of it is in Yorkshire. A tree which, from the library window, looks to be but a few yards away, marks the boundary line; the house is in Nottinghamshire, the greater part of the park and a large portion of the estate are in Yorkshire, and from a high piece of ground in the gardens you can see the hills of Derbyshire. Standing on the gravel outside the hall the sound of falling water comes pleasantly upon the ear. This suggests the streams and wells from which the place takes its name. The sound is associated with a grotto which stands near a small lake, whose waters are inhabited by trout and grayling. This grotto, which is of picturesque formation, is of large size and of evident antiquity. It is composed of huge blocks and greyish stone, which, arranged two hundred years ago with a kind of studied gracelessness, have remained to form a cool and desirable retreat on a

hot day. The stones are of vast size, some of them, and John White, who raised the structure somewhere about two centuries back, at the cost, at any rate, of immense labour, introduced various forms of stone from the petrifying wells of Derbyshire, and made a ceiling to his picturesque summer-house of the beautiful spars and ores which were found in the mines belonging to the family in Yorkshire.

The head of a tiger, his terrible jaws open, and exposing rows of sharp and curving weapons, resting upon the extremity of the balustrade of the main staircase at Wallingwells, confronts all Sir Thomas White's visitors. The skin of the tiger (which was shot by Colonel White in India) to the extremity of the tail is continued along the upward sloping bannister, so that the animal looks in the act of springing, and the stranger may be pardoned if he involuntarily withdraws his hand from the bell handle, and retreats from the portico with more or less precipitancy. The house is full of such trophies of the tropical chase. They have most of them been brought home by Colonel White, Sir Thomas' eldest son. There are the tusks of elephants, the heads of ibex and bison, and birds of brilliant plumage. In an ante-room belonging to the library there is a collection of ancient weapons, amongst which is an ancient breech-loader, with the old-fashioned flint lock, which serves to prove the fallacy of a prevalent notion that breechloading guns are modern inventions. The house is a museum of curiosities. There are the handsome and costly trappings worn by the horse ridden by the first Duke of Marlborough. The trappings, which are of rich and elaborate workmanship, were used by Sir Thomas White, when, as High Sheriff of the county in 1833, he rode out to meet his Majesty's judges on their way to open the Commission of Assize at Nottingham. General Armstrong is twice associated with the illustrious duke in the Wallingwells collection; his daughter was married to an ancestor of Sir Thomas White's. He was governor of the Tower of London where his ashes now lie. Bridget Taylor, the heiress, had some queer fancies. The chief of these, so far as I can make out, was an almost absorbing fondness for silver. Her toilet service was of this beautiful and precious metal, the backs of her hair brushes were of silver, and the furniture of her baby house was of silver filigree work. Locked in an antique cabinet of tortoise-shell, which stands in one of the smaller rooms at Wallingwells, is a collection of small nick-knacks which may be described as the chairs and tables of a house of dolls. They are all of silver and supposed to have been worked in Italy. They are perfect examples of miniature furniture, every detail, even to the folding of the leaves of the tables, being represented. These were part of the belongings of the heiress. Under the head of curiosities and objects of interest, I may mention one which appears amongst a collection of stuffed birds which occupies a portion of one of the corridors. It is a heron round

whose neck an eel is coiled. The bird with the eel still alive was picked up from the shores of the lake near the house, and his death was readily accounted for. The heron had pierced the head of the eel with his long bill, and the snake-fish

round his enemy's neck,
Locked in stiff rings of adamantine coil,

strangled the bird who perished with his prey. The incident is a remarkable one, and Lady Maitland, one of Sir Thomas White's daughters, has reproduced it in bronze. This admirable model stands on the dining room mantelpiece. Lady Maitland, besides being a clever and artistic worker in bronze, as several objects in different parts of the house testify, is an equally clever worker in marble, and perhaps the best specimen of her art is a small sculptured bust of her father.

The bibliomaniac would say that the cream of the Wallingwells heirlooms was to be found on the shelves of the library. It is a famous collection of old literature, some in black letter, some in manuscript. The room is filled the thoughts of past centuries; a book bound in coloured cloth would be as much out of place among that dingy fraternity as a harlequin in a synod of saints. One of these books that I chanced to look at was a tract dedicated in 1696, by a celebrated Nonconformist divine of that day, to that very heiress of whom I have spoken, exhorting her not to put her trust in riches, but rather, I suppose, in Nonconformist divines. Lady Mildmay's "Lesson of Heaven and Earth," written in manuscript forty years earlier, contained no doubt some valuable prescriptions for mending spiritual weakness. The pictures at Wallingwells are interesting, because they serve to tell the family history. A portrait of Sir Ralph Knight in the dining room suggests that the well-known family of which he was a distinguished representative, had some connection with the Whites, and calls for an enquiry which leads to the information that some of the Yorkshire part of the Wallingwells estate passed from the hands of Mr. Gally Knight into those of its present owner. In the same room there is a representation of the first Duke of Marlborough, whose horse wears the very gold and crimson trappings which were worn by Sir Thomas White as High Sheriff of the county nearly half a century ago, and which have only seen daylight on rare occasions since. In another part of the house the same warrior noble is presented by Sir Godfrey Kneller, who painted the double portrait—for the duke and his faithful general appear on the same canvas—in fulfilment of a special commission. There are, I think, in different parts of the house, three portraits of the first of the Churchills who held the rank of duke, and in two of them General Armstrong is introduced. As I have said the daughter of this illustrious soldier was married to an ancestor of Sir Thomas

White's, a fact which will, perhaps, account for the presence of these pictures in the Wallingwells collection. Among the other portraits are a couple representing Sir Peter Lely's best style, portraits of Miss Jenny Deering, afterwards Lady Ogle, and Lady Castlemaine ; a portrait of Miss Bridget Taylor, the heiress who was so fond of silver ; one of Lady St. Aubin, and a number of family likenesses in oils. Besides these, what may be described as family pictures, there are a few good paintings,—landscapes, seascapes, and others, by masters, and in the dining room there are three large pictures by Paillou, an artist of some repute about a century ago. There is much that is interesting in the halls of this old county family who owned an estate at Cotgrave before their untitled ancestor purchased the manor of Tuxford, and took up his residence there more than three hundred years ago. It is pleasant to hear from the lips of the surviving head of that family, that one is welcome to examine the treasures of cabinet, gallery, and library, or to wander at will about the well-kept walks of a pleasant and well-ordered garden. Under some circumstances one would be inclined to tarry long ; to take a seat in that still old library, and in the soft light of a May evening to imbibe the wisdom of the mediæval scribes ; to examine more closely the articles of *virtu* in the drawing room where there is a handsome sandal wood cabinet full of quaint little trinkets, and to read a letter which was written by the Rajah of Cashere to Colonel White, when that gallant officer commanded the 16th Lancers, but time presses, and one can only take a cursory glance at these several objects of interest.

WATNALL HALL.



WATNALL Hall is interesting for a variety of reasons. It is an old building, situated in the corner of a county, pleasant parts of which are chosen for modern houses of more or less pretention, and which often rather spoil the landscape than add to its beauty ; it can lay claim to associations, that are to some extent mixed up with the history of the county, and it has since the early part of the seventeenth century been the seat of a family, of both antiquity and distinction—the Rollestons. These were formerly of Rolleston, in Staffordshire, from which place they took, or gave, their name. The Rollestons, of Rolleston, they were, before they disposed of their estate to the Mosleys (who have been settled there since), and came to live in this part of the country on property which they acquired by marriage a long while ago. They derived their descent through a younger son of Ralph Rolleston, who settled at Lea, in Derbyshire, about the time of Edward the Third. Some time during the reign of the good Queen Bess, Ralph Rolleston married the co-heiress of Sir Richard Bingham, the then head of a family of some consequence in the county, who lived at, and owned, Watnall Chaworth, and by this alliance the Rollestons became possessed of the house, which their descendants have occupied for generations. A considerable estate in Lincolnshire was brought into the family, somewhere about 1680, and they have held lands in these two counties ever since. The house at Watnall is unmistakably old. The beautiful iron gates—some of the best work of that famous ironworker Shaw—which serve to make fast the entrance to the shady drive leading to the higher ground, upon which the building is situated, bears traces of antiquity. In some places the metal is worn thin, and has slowly succumbed to climatic influences. The gilded eagle's head—the crest of the Rollestons—which looks defiance on the very summit of these tall gates, has lost its lustre ; the lower work is tarnished with age. Formerly these same gates occupied a different position. They served to guard a flight of ancient and worn stone steps, almost immediately in front of the house. The steps are there still, though they are not used. Lichens have eaten into them ; moneywort and other parasitic plants grow profusely from their crevices. These steps have never been moved, and I should think they never will be whilst a Rolleston owns Watnall. Mary Chaworth probably tripped light-footed down that picturesque

flight after dancing at the balls with the young gallants of the county. You can see the hills of Annesley from the terrace, and it is said that Byron's Mary sometimes escaped the vigilance of her guardians, and left her home, surreptitiously to dance at the balls, for which Watnall was famous. The house is as old as the steps. Portions of it were built in the reigns of three English monarchs—Henry the Eighth, Elizabeth, and Anne—and it is easy to see that at certain periods it has been found necessary to make alterations, with the view of remedying symptoms of decay. But these have been made with care and judgment, and the building has not suffered in consequence. It is a brick house of delightful colour, which time has laid on in the course of centuries. For a house was there as far back as 1620, when the Rollestons migrated from Staffordshire, and it is fair to suppose that a good deal of the present building was in existence then. The architecture is somewhat quaint ; from one aspect the building looks like a solid and somewhat conventional block, from another, and this, the principal one, it is agreeably broken, and almost divided into wings. Further investigation shows that it is built upon three sides of a quadrangle, and the quadrangle, and the design has been, in a measure, disturbed by the addition of a straight piece of brickwork, which enclosed several rooms.

The interior is large and roomy, and when it is stated that Mr. Lancelot Rolleston, who now owns the estate, and lives at Watnall Hall, is unmarried, it may readily be imagined that certain of the apartments are not regularly used. Under the present *regime*, the library and the dining room may be described as the principal room, though these are not the only apartments in the house to which interest attaches, or which call for notice in an article of this kind. The library is panelled and quiet ; supplied with a collection of books, which, from the nature of the bindings appear to have been been got together at no very recent date, and with a few pictures, chief amongst which is a fine drawing of a Rolleston, surnamed Lancelot, who, in his time, was High Sheriff of the county, and who, during his ownership made some additions to the hall. There is a monument in Watnall Church to the memory of this gentleman, who was respected in the county, and esteemed by those with whom he had anything to do. On a small table, embedded in velvet, there is the hunting horn, which was presented to Mr. Rolleston, a year or two ago, as master of the South Nottinghamshire Hounds, by the followers of the hunt—a token, no less of their admiration of the master's conduct in the field, than of their appreciation of his geniality and uniform courtesy. This responsible and trying post—for even fox-hunting has its trials and responsibilities, Mr. Lancelot Rolleston accepted, on the resignation of Mr. Chaworth Musters, a few years ago, and hunting men say that the country has never furnished better sport under any previous master.

In the dining room, hanging over the mantelpiece, is a portrait of the late Colonel Rolleston (Sherwood Foresters), who, from 1837 to 1849, was one of the representatives of the southern division of the county in the House of Commons, and for some years chairman of the Nottinghamshire Quarter Sessions. This portrait was presented to Mr. Rolleston by a constituency, which was attached to him by ties, other than those represented by Parliamentary duties and electoral requirements, and it is said to be a true and faithful likeness. There are in the same room some other family portraits, which, perhaps, only have an interest for those to whom they belong, and in other parts there is a further collection of ancestors, amongst whom possibly—for their identity cannot be clearly established—is that member of the family, who, in a work little read now-a-days, is mentioned as one of the intended deliverers of an imprisoned Queen. He is there described as “a squire of good worth in the country, and a devoted Catholic man.” One of those who had joined the delivering league turning traitor; the whole matter, so says the historian, was betrayed, the authors of the plot were placed in durance vile, and Mr. Rolleston, spelled in the narrative Rowleston, was condemned to die.

On the mantelpiece in the dining room there is a small likeness of the late Canon Kingsley—whom it was Mr. Rolleston's privilege to know intimately. One is impressed with the quaintness of some of the upper rooms at Watnall.

There are a number of bed rooms in the older part of the house, the formation of which is both peculiar and picturesque. The windows are small, and set in deep recesses. The plaster ceiling, of a pinkish colour and sloping at the sides, is extremely curious and old-fashioned. There are numbers of these rooms upstairs, and there is also a curious panelled apartment of Elizabethan date. Here there are one or two hunting pictures, to which some special family interest attaches, for Mr. Rolleston inherited his love of the chase from his ancestors. Here, too, are some heraldic devices, in stained glass, which has never been disturbed, and which has let into that old room a coloured filtration of light, for no one knows how long. All these are family shields, and the bearings are distinctly traceable and authentic. Higher up in the house there is what Mr. Rolleston calls, a lumber room, but what might fitly be described as a disused armoury. It is a grim-looking apartment. Reared up in one of the corners is a rusty collection of musketry, —a pile of ancient flint locks which were originally procured for the defence of the house when the neighbourhood was disturbed by the Luddite riots. Scattered about, are the ammunition cases, also much the worse for age, but still preserved to give an idea how warm was the reception that awaited any invasion of the Watnall domain,

From the leads of Watnall you can get glimpses of five counties, and a view of garden and field, woodland and distant hill, which it would be difficult to match in this part of the country. Beneath is the old-fashioned garden, with its gigantic laurel bushes—that in front of those old steps, like a huge wigwam made of foliage ; its curious yew hedge, which encloses the arena wherein cock-fighting formerly took place ; its old bowling green, which is now occasionally used for that game of bowls, which is threatened with extinction in these days of dangerous pastimes ; with its small conservatory, bright with geraniums, and calceolarias, and with its thatched bee-house, full of murmurous sound. Of that bee-house I made a closer inspection. It was designed by Mr. Rolleston, who takes considerable interest in bee culture, and is large enough inside for a study. As a matter of fact, Mr. Rolleston occasionally shares this house with the bees. The boxes in which the insects deposit their honey are so arranged that they cannot fly about in the interior of the apartment, whilst their operations can be watched and studied through glass. So the bee-house serves a double purpose, besides being an ornament to the garden. Whilst the bees are making their honey, and arranging their domestic matters in the glass cases, Mr. Rolleston is writing his letters at a table, and the apartment is filled with a soothing sound.

WELBECK.

IN November, 1878, by favour of the late Duke of Portland, I was permitted to visit Welbeck Abbey, and the stupendous works connected with it, for there is no exaggeration in what has been written and rumoured concerning their magnitude. I reached the abbey at eleven o'clock one morning, after a drive of nine miles through a racy air, with just a touch of "winter's sting." The long grass on either side of the undulating park-drive had a thin, crisp covering of hoar frost, which sparkled in the rich November sunlight, that gave a more golden hue to the dying foliage of oak and elm. I was somewhat disturbed at the outset by the intelligence that one could not see Welbeck thoroughly in less than three of these short days, knowing full well that my stay could not extend over more than one. A brief November day would scarcely afford time to see the works at Welbeck, if you wished to inspect the extensive out-buildings which are, as it were, the outcome of those works. Then there is the house itself, with its grand suites of rooms, rare pictures, and treasures of art from the master brushes of Snyders, Vandyck, Rembrandt, Sir Joshua Reynolds, and a host of other great painters. Welbeck is at once extraordinary and magnificent. A quarter of a mile away from the house there is the perpetual buzz of machinery, and a vast space of ground covered with sheds, in which the newest mechanical inventions are in constant use. The vastness of the work-yards astonishes one ; they might be the premises of some great contractor who had an order for the building of a big village. Very soon after his succession to these immense estates and the titles that go with them, the fifth Duke of Portland commenced a series of improvements on a scale of unprecedented extent, and for upwards of eighteen years Welbeck was in the hands of the builders. During this time his grace devoted something like £100,000 per year of his princely income to the improvement of the Welbeck estate, and some 1,500 workpeople of all classes were constantly employed in carrying out his instructions. The numerous great and expensive works, which are to be seen at Welbeck, were under the immediate supervision of the noble duke himself, who really ought to be described as their architect. When a new building was to be erected he caused a model of it to be constructed, and a flaw or an aspect of inelegance, was detected by him

at once. That he was a man of exalted taste in matters of architecture is abundantly manifest everywhere on his estate. The very lodges which dot the park, and which are occupied by keepers and others in his grace's employ, are models of architectural beauty, and everywhere there are evidences of superb taste, and considerable engineering skill. In the late duke's time, people applying for employment at Welbeck were able to obtain it—no matter what they were—and the full market value has been paid for their labour.

Welbeck Abbey has a history. It is one of the oldest mansions in the country, though few of its original features are left ; certainly it has no monastic appearance now. Much of it is new, and the new seems to assimilate with the old so exactly that it is difficult to say what part of the building is ancient and what modern. It is a vast pile, white and castellated, with innumerable windows, overlooking Sherwood Forest, where the immemorial oaks grow, and the deer have a peaceful existence. Before the Norman invasion Welbeck was held by a Saxon, named Sweyn. After the conquest it became part of the Manor of Cuckney, and was held by a family of that name, who founded the abbey, and dedicated it to St. James, in the reign of the Second Henry. After an existence of 398 years, the abbey was destroyed by Henry the Eighth, along with other similar institutions up and down the country. After being occupied by a family named Whalley, and by a London clothworker, the abbey came into the hands of the Cavendishes, who converted it into a noble mansion. In 1619, King James visited Sir William Cavendish at the abbey, and, in 1663, Charles the First was entertained there, with "such excess in feasting, as had scarcely ever been known in England," the abbey at that time being in the possession of the Earl of Newcastle. It passed from the Cavendishes to the Bentincks by marriage. The only remains of the old monastic building, now to be seen, are some arched rooms in the lower part of the house, which are used by certain of the servants. In 1604 the present building was commenced, and being held by a succession of noblemen, each of whom seems to have added some improvements, though on a scale which is utterly insignificant, when compared with what has been done by the late owner, it has developed by easy gradations, until now it is unquestionably one of the most commodious houses in the country. On the occasion of my visit to Welbeck, I had spent the morning out of doors about the "works," in the stables and outhouses, which are on a gigantic scale, and in other of the outworks, and there was only time for a very hasty inspection of the house. The Gothic hall of Welbeck is a gem of architecture, the existence of which is pretty well known. This is part of the old building, which was altered and restored by the Countess of Oxford,—another

"Bess of Hardwick," in 1751. The ceiling is a marvel of beauty. It is of pendant fan tracery, delicately and elaborately designed, and the room is splendidly decorated in pure Gothic style in keeping with the ceiling, which I have but imperfectly described. The room contains at least half a dozen rare antique cabinets of ebony and bronze, and of inlaid marble. The large drawing room at Welbeck is a treasure-house. On its walls are hung large and valuable pictures in plenty. The Duke of Portland has one of the best private collections of pictures in England. The walls of the drawing room and of the dining room, which is the largest room in the house, were, and I dare say are now, literally covered with splendid paintings, some of them of great size, and all the works of the best known artists. In the last-named room there are Rembrandt's famous portrait of himself, a portrait by Sir Joshua Reynolds, of one of the first Earls of Portland, who, when plain William Bentinck, came over on his first visit to England as page-of-honour to William, Prince of Orange, afterwards William the Third. On the accession of this King, William Bentinck was created Baron of Cirencester, Viscount Woodstock, and Earl of Portland, all of which titles are held by the present Duke. This splendid suite of rooms, which forms part of the old house, has recently been extended, and several, what may be, perhaps, not improperly described as ante-rooms, have been added. The new fireplaces are of nickel silver, beautifully white, and highly polished, the mantelpieces being of white marble. Here there are more pictures. There is one of the second Duke of Portland, of that distinguished patriot and statesman, Lord George Bentinck, painted when a boy, and that bright pretty girl, in the pale blue dress, with silver embroidery, is Lady Margaret Cavendish Harley, who, in 1734, married the second Duke of Portland. There is here a portrait of that very plucky woman, Jane Cavendish, who kept garrison for her father at Welbeck against the Parliament army. There are also in these rooms portraits of the two Charleses, that of Charles the First, showing what the monarch was like in his boyhood. At the north entrance to the house there stretches for some distance a lovely little conservatory, which, on this chill November day, is bright with flowers—chrysanthemums and primulas. In what is known as Lady Oxford's wing at the south front, another story, with a magnificent suite of rooms, has been added to the house by the late Duke. The rooms are very expensively fitted. Most of the walls are of salmon colour, with chastely gilded mouldings, or panels, each panel large enough to contain a life-size portrait, and much of the furniture is in the Louis XVI. style. A finer suite of rooms than this could not be seen anywhere, with their tall mahogany doors, oak floors, elegantly gilded cornices, and mantelpieces of pure white marble. If I remember rightly, the late Duke

added fourteen new rooms to the Oxford wing, and all these are decorated and finished with the utmost purity of taste. Occasionally in this wing one comes upon some choice imitations of Gibbon's carving, the work of an Edwinstowe artist. The carving of the marble mantelpieces, it should be stated, has been executed by workmen employed at Welbeck. In the sitting room of the late Duchess, which is in the old part of this wing, there is a fine chimneypiece of marble, inlaid with Wedgewood's sage green plaques, In order that furniture and other heavy things may be conveniently moved, the mansion is supplied with hydraulic lifts, which are constructed to work from top to bottom of the house, and in this way furniture is removed from one story to another. There was an hydraulic shaft connected with the kitchens, and the dining room can be supplied by means of a small waggon, which, lowered by the shaft, ran upon rails along one of the underground passages. These rails—which are something like the rails of a tramway, terminate at a kind of iron cupboard, which is heated by steam, and in this the viands can be placed, and kept hot until they are required for consumption in the adjoining room. An underground passage is connected with the old riding school, which is entered by a trap door, opened by means of a crank. Only the few who have seen this great room can form any conception of its proportions, or of its magnificence. In the Duke of Newcastle's time it was used as a riding school—now it is put to a nobler use. It is used as a museum of art, containing long rows of choice paintings. There must have been several hundred pictures in this room—portraits and landscapes by famous artists long since passed away. You walked between avenues of pictures and of books, for there are several thousand volumes there, piled up in stacks upon the floor. The floor of this magnificent art gallery is of polished oak, and the inner portion of the roof, which is in the style of Westminster Hall, is painted to represent a glorious sky. The tall doors are wholly, and the walls partly, covered with looking-glass, which gives effect to what would make one of the finest banqueting halls in the kingdom. The glass alone in this room must have cost an almost fabulous sum. Four cut-glass chandeliers, each weighing nearly a ton, are suspended in a line from the roof ; from the hammer beams are twenty-eight smaller cut-glass chandeliers, and on the walls are fastened sixty-four cut-glass brackets or side lights. There are in all 2,000 gas lights in this grand apartment. What must be the effect when all these are lighted ? The roof outside is covered with copper, and two turrets have been erected. In them are placed a set of clocks, which have been very fittingly described as marvels of constructive skill. Mr. Benson, of London, speaks of them thus :—“In a set of clock calendars which I some time since provided for his Grace the Duke of Portland, the clock showed the time on four dials,

five feet nine inches in diameter, quarters, hours, &c. (the well-known Cambridge chimes), on bells of 12 cwt., repeating the hour after the first, second, and third quarters. The two sides of an adjoining tower show a calendar, which indicates on special circles of a large dial, by means of separate hands, the month of the year, the day of the month, and the day of the week." This building, like the others, which have been erected by the Duke of Portland, is connected with the house by underground passages. There are some miles of these passages at Welbeck. They lead in all directions, and are very pleasant to walk in. One of them, which leads from the house to the works, diverging to the riding school, was used only by the late Duke. There is a passage leading from the house half way to Worksop, and you can walk underground in that direction for fully twenty minutes ; there is another which takes one some distance into the park, and others leading to the library and cellars. These passages are constructed on a uniform principle, and they are wide enough to allow three people to walk abreast. They are lighted both by natural light and by gas. The light is admitted from above through circles of plate glass, which are placed in round frames. Appearing at intervals of about every ten yards amongst the grass of the park, these circular arrangements would puzzle any person who was not in the secret. In the passages gas is always burning. The tunnels are built of brick with a covering of hard plaster, and are perfectly free from damp. The floor is composed of some kind of pulverised stone, very pleasant to walk upon. Where the tunnel crosses a road, light is most ingeniously admitted from the side. The library at Welbeck, to which the finishing touches are now being given, is underground. It is a magnificent building, the work of long years. It is parallel with the picture gallery, and is divided into five large rooms, the ceilings of which are level with the surface of the park. The doors open one into another, so that the rooms can be made to form one great whole. The mahogany windows open into a long corridor covered with glass, and the whole building is effectively heated by steam pipes. Down below the earth's surface there is not a sound to be heard in any one of the rooms, and a soft and subdued light is admitted through the large octagonal plate-glass arrangements in the ceiling. The library comprises reading rooms, and a room for periodicals. The cornices and ceilings are very handsome. The total length of the library is 236 feet, and there are ample facilities for lighting the rooms with gas, there being in all about 1,100 burners here. Closely adjoining the library is a subterranean apartment of magnificent proportions, into which the light of heaven is admitted by about forty large octagonal sunlights placed in rows in the vast ceiling. It was suggested that the Duke meant this for a church, but there is nothing ecclesiastical in its appearance. No, it is not a church. It looks more like the very

antithesis of a church—a ball room, and what a ball room it would make ! Its floor is of oak, and its massive roof supported by iron girders. At one end it is entered from above by means of a spiral staircase ; at the other it is approached by subterranean passages. Its flat ceiling is beautifully ornamented, and the eight iron girders which support it are of massive proportions. The room has been, as it were, dug out of the solid clay ; it was commenced five years ago, and to-day workmen are very busy within its spacious walls. This underground building, of which there is such a quantity at Welbeck, strange though it may seem to those who read about it, has certain special advantages. There is not the slightest suspicion of draught in these rooms, they are thoroughly heated by steam pipes, are perfectly free from damp, and the means of lighting employed is most successful.

Foremost amongst the outbuildings connected with Welbeck Abbey is the new riding school, a building of extraordinary beauty, and of gigantic proportions. Its vast floor is fresh-covered with soft tan, which is never allowed to get into disorder. Here, most days, the horses were exercised, generally in the presence of their owner, who had the reputation of being a keen judge of horse flesh. The riding house measures about 380 feet in length, 112 wide, and 50 feet high. Its roof is of glass and iron, semi-circular in shape, and richly ornamented. The walls are of stone, and the interior contains some fifty cast-iron columns. There are upwards of eight thousand gas jets, these being placed in circles round the capitals of each of the fifty columns. The roof is divided into three compartments, the centre one being of glass and iron, and the two side ones of pitch pine, covered with copper tiling. There is an underground passage from the abbey to the riding house ; his grace entered the latter building at one of the corners, and from this point he witnessed the performances of his horses. In another part of the grounds there is a “tan gallop” for the exercise of horses. The whole length of this—1,270 feet, is covered with glass. The Welbeck stables are as large as a small village. The hunting stables stand on a square acre of ground, and are arranged in the form of a quadrangle. There is accommodation here for some fifty or sixty horses. The late Duke took a great interest in his horses ; he knew them all by name, and would sometimes feed them with his own hands. His grace’s stud consisted of more than a hundred horses. This number included carriage horses, and they were most carefully tended by a large staff of grooms and stablemen. There is stabling for about a dozen “strangers,” so that tradesmen, and others, who drive to Welbeck on business are allowed to put up their horses. In the coach house were carriages of every variety—landau, brougham, and State carriage. These were seldom, or never, used, though they were always in readiness. The Duke’s favourite carriage was a sort

of waggonette, completely covered with a thick curtain arranged in the form of a cube, with flat top. Cut in the curtain, are some half-dozen "eye-holes," containing oval glasses, so that a person sitting in the carriage could see what was going on about him without the slightest difficulty. Inside, the soft cushions had a covering of dark green, and the carriage was old-fashioned, and exceedingly comfortable. The harness room contains a large collection of harness of all kinds, which is hung in glass cases, and is always ready for use. In one of these upright cases is a set of State harness, which belonged to the late Duke of Portland. I have just time to take a run through the cow houses and dairy. The Duke of Portland had some famous Alderneys, and they were housed in most comfortable quarters. The cow house, which is of great size, is divided into stalls, each stall being of galvanised metal and slate. The roof is of pitch pine, and the house is supplied with revolving iron shutters, so that the part which is open in good weather, can be closed in days of cold. There is a second cow house, of similar proportions to this one, to which the animals are transferred when the place requires cleaning. The doors by which all these outhouses are entered are large and beautifully grained, and supplied with brass handles, kept in a perfect state of polish. The graining work, I am told, was done by a tramp, who, coming to Welbeck, and applying for work, was at once "set on" by the clerk of the works, and he turned out to be a thoroughly competent workman. The dairy is a pretty little stone building. It has a flooring of Minton's encaustic tiles, from the centre of which springs a crystal fountain, set in a marble basin. The china milk dishes are placed on marble benches, and the cream jars, higher up in niches let into the walls. The workpeople employed on the estate can have the very best milk and butter from this dairy, at something under the market value.

The workshops at Welbeck are much too vast to admit of anything but a casual mention. There are great sheds, in which every kind of work is done by skilled workmen, aided by the very best machinery. In one room circular saws are whirring, and doing their speedy work; in another blacksmiths' fires are burning, and men are striking sparks from large pieces of hot iron; in another gigantic shed men are repairing carts and implements belonging to the estate; in another a huge slab of stone is succumbing to the fell movement of a frame-saw, whilst another piece is being smoothed by a "rubber," which is kept in perpetual motion by a small vertical engine. The waste steam from the boilers has been put to an excellent use; by it the whole of the workshops and buildings connected with them are heated, the steam passing through iron pipes—an admirable arrangement. There are joiners' shops, painters' shops, and plumbers' shops, which help to form a set of workshops, such as none but the largest contractors possess.

In another part of these very extensive work yards are stacks of timber—giant slices of oak, sound and hard as adamant, and close by there are great boles of trees, which have been brought from the forest by one or other of the five monster traction engines that are housed in sheds by themselves. Other great sheds are filled with iron rods of all thicknesses, and iron piping of every dimension, for all manner of work is done in these shops. A new set of offices, the walls of stone, and the interior fitted in the very best style, with stone staircases, clerk's rooms, private rooms, postman's rooms, lavatories, and heated by piping, through which passes the "exhaust" steam from the adjoining works, have recently been completed, or nearly so, and opposite a new house for the house steward, with spacious and expensively-fitted rooms, in which pitch pine has been largely employed, has just been erected. Near to, and connected with the works, the late Duke caused to be built an immense fire-proof store, which is divided into three compartments, the roof of each compartment being of iron, and the inner sliding doors of the same metal, the floor being of asphalte. A great block of stabling, with stalls of iron and pitch pine, have here been built, and a new fire engine house, with special stabling accommodation, was, at the time alluded to, scarcely out of the builder's hands. I ought to have stated that in the house, and about the works, are ample appliances for suppressing an outbreak of fire. In the midst of the workshops there is an engine shed, with a fire engine, capable of throwing a heavy stream of water some seventy feet high, with hose reels, salvage waggons, and all the necessary appliances.

The gardens and pleasure grounds of Welbeck are so extensive that it would be impossible to see them thoroughly in a day. There are fifty acres of pleasure ground, composed of rare young shrubs, firs from Mexico and India, of grassy lawns, smooth and soft as velvet, intersected by a broad and continuous gravel walk, flagged in the centre. In one part of the pleasure grounds the late Duke caused to be made a large out-door skating rink, surrounded by graceful shrubs, which preserve their freshness through the cold weather. There is a large circular arrangement of iron near the foot of the lake,—a boathouse, and I am told that the top of this has been filled in with asphalte, so that it too could be used as a skating rink. The kitchen gardens cover an immense area of ground, and produce every kind of fruit and vegetable. They are surrounded by high walls, and are now being made more extensive. There are long lengths of standard rose trees, which, in the summer time, furnish lines of colour and fill the air with a delicious perfume; there are vast ranges of glass, where delicious fruits are forced—nectarines and grapes, in unheard of quantities. The kitchen gardens are formed in separate compartments, and they extend as far

as the Mansfield turnpike road, near to the Welbeck Gas Works. To hasten the ripening of the apricots, which occupy a wall one thousand feet in length, Rendle's patent lean-to glass has been employed. This is a moveable arrangement, covering the whole length of the wall, and it is also used to protect the strawberry beds, on the opposite side of the path, which are exactly as long as the wall. At one end of the kitchen gardens a broad high wall of stone, with a carriage entrance, has just been built. The Duke made most lavish presents of game and fruit, and he supplied some of his friends with horses and ponies.

And now a word concerning the late owner of this magnificent domain. His Grace William John Cavendish Scott-Bentinck, fifth Duke of Portland, Marquis of Tichfield, Earl of Portland, Viscount Woodstock, Baron of Cirencester, and co-heir to the Barony of Ogle, of Welbeck Abbey, Nottinghamshire ; Fullarton House, Ayrshire ; Langwell Goldspie, Caithness ; Bothal Castle, Northumberland, and Harcourt House, Cavendish-square, London, succeeded his father, in 1854, having previously represented the borough of Lymn in the House of Commons. Though his grace took no active part in politics, he exhibited, amid the magnificent solitude of Welbeck, a very keen interest in matters of national importance, and current literature found its way into his hands. The late Duke of Portland lived amongst his people, by whom he was held in the highest esteem, and it may be said that he spent the last twenty years of his life in doing good, inasmuch as he gave employment in prosperous times, and in times when the labour market has been in a most unhappy condition, to thousands of workpeople. The present Duke has enjoyed the title long enough to win the esteem of all classes.

WINKBURN.

WINKBURN Hall, the seat of Lieutenant-Colonel Edward Strelly Pegge-Burnell, of the Coldstream Guards, a justice of the peace for the county, who is also possessed of an estate in Yorkshire, to which is attached a charming old place called Beauchief Abbey, better known to Sheffield people than to us, is one of the oldest and one of the most interesting houses in Nottinghamshire. Perhaps but few persons are familiar with its proportions, and only those who have made researches among local records are acquainted with its early history. The house enjoys a seclusion which is as complete as it is charming. It is not more than four miles distant from Southwell, in a northerly direction, but that slender distance is sufficient to remove it from all contact with what little life there is in the quiet town just named. The roads which skirt its park are but little used, the clean and pretty village over which it predominates is as quiet as an empty church, and great trees surround its venerable walls, still firm and substantial, without a trace of decay. In fact, its situation and natural surroundings give it most complete and absolute privacy. Several generations of Burnells, the representatives of an old and influential county family, which at different times has furnished four High Sheriffs of Nottinghamshire since 1702, have lived there. Before they became possessed of the Manor it was the seat of a religious order, of whom, after the lapse of centuries, there are some slight traces yet remaining. This order or society was of great antiquity; its members were knights hospitallers or Knights of St. John of Jerusalem, and when they became established of course it was necessary to find them accommodation. So one Adam Tyson generously came to their aid and granted them the Manor of Winkburn, where they continued to reside for a considerable period. A streamlet named the Wink, which to this day threads its way through the green and flowery pastures of the park, may reasonably be supposed to have provided them with fish, and probably in order the more readily to secure their favourite diet, they broadened the stream in places. About a mile from the house is to be seen a holy well, a place of interest, which is undoubtedly connected with the past history of the place. The order to which this brotherhood belonged originally existed for the protection of pilgrims travelling on their way to the holy city, and they are said to have become very wealthy. How this wealth was accumu-

lated does not transpire, and the searcher after knowledge fails to find out whether it came out of the pockets of protected pilgrims or out of successful demands upon the Winkburn tenantry, such as those that were imposed by the priors of the neighbouring house at Thurgarton. In the silence of history it must be taken for granted that the followers of St. John of Jerusalem were above the mean exactions that were practised in the name of St. Augustine, and that the wealth of this Winkburn brotherhood was the result of successive grants made to them. That they were thought much of in high quarters is certain, for they had granted to them a house in London, and it is said that a member of their order was the first made baron in England, and had his seat among the Lords of Parliament. These knights hospitallers held the Manor of Winkburn until the reign of Edward the Sixth, when it was conveyed, together with the monastery, to William Burnell, a London merchant, and to Constance his wife, in exchange for certain lands in one of the southern counties. The Manor was possessed by the Burnells until the death of Darcy Burnell, in 1772. This gentleman left the estate by will to his heir-at-law, a procedure which seems to have occasioned some litigation, for a jury was called upon to give an opinion in the matter, and they awarded the estate to two persons descended from the female branch of the family of Burnell. So that the Burnells have been settled at Winkburn for nearly three centuries and a half.

An almost complete history of this ancient family is to be obtained from the memorials in the church. This venerable structure would be an interesting study for the archæologist. It is full of antiquity, if one may use that description ; smothered with ivy, and surrounded by sunken gravestones. Not long ago these humble out-door memorials were ivy-grown. The fond plant had extended its embrace to almost every tombstone in the churchyard, and it required considerable effort to clear it away. In the church there are a number of memorials to the Burnells, dating from the middle of the sixteenth century down to 1878, when the late Mr. Burnell died, leaving his son, Colonel Burnell, as his successor, and three other sons, two of whom have followed their brother's lead, and adopted the profession of arms. One of them is Colonel of the 7th Hussars ; the other holds a commission in the Rifle Brigade. The original name of the family seems to have been Steade, and they appear to have held lands in Yorkshire long before they came to Winkburn, some mention of the family being made in certain old writings in the reign of Edward the Third. In 1768 Thomas Steade married a daughter of Strelly Pegge, of Beauchieff Abbey, and sister of Peter Pegge, of Winkburn Hall, who devised his estates to his nephew, Mr. Pegge-Burnell. Broughton Benjamin Steade, born in 1774, was High Sheriff of Derbyshire in 1839, and he succeeded to the estates in Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire of his maternal uncle,

Peter Pegge-Burnell, Esquire, of Winkburn, and in compliance with an injunction contained in the will, he took by Royal authority the name of Pegge-Burnell. Beauchieff Abbey formerly belonged to the Strellys, but by marriage it passed into the Pegge-Burnell family, whose property and residence it now is.

Winkburn Hall is a compact building of brick, with white stone facings, which cause it to stand out conspicuously to one who has passed through the park, and finds himself in front of the mansion. Its exterior bears evidences of antiquity but not of decay. The precise date of its erection I was not able to ascertain from any member of the family, but that it was built in an age when good work was put into English houses is certain, if the testimony of brickwork which has borne the test of centuries, apparently without making the slightest concession to time, may be taken into account. In the upper part of the house there are some oak staircases, which have been in existence for many generations, and which to-day do not seem very much worn, by the trial they have undergone. The lower and principal rooms are not large, but they are extremely comfortable and well arranged. Several of them contain most interesting specimens of carving. These are to be seen over the close-fitting massive oak doors, and they illustrate, for the most part, well-known fables. There are six of these doors, and they were formerly in one room; they are now judiciously distributed in the principal rooms in the lower part of the house. The mantelpiece in the dining room is also a very fine piece of woodwork by no means modern. For a centrepiece it has a head of Apollo—the features of the god being admirably carved. In a house of such antiquity, and the ancestral home of an old country family, one would expect to find a collection of portraits. At Winkburn there are a number of these, and a very interesting sprinkling of paintings of another order. It is easy to distinguish the art of Sir Peter Lely in the two large portraits of William and Elizabeth Burnell. The hands with their blue veins are as delicate as the petals of a lily; the flesh tints are soft and fresh, rendered as only that master could render them. In the costumes of the different periods of which they lived, are Darcy Burnell, Acton Burnell, and a number of other members of the family, and Lord Essex, the favourite of Elizabeth. Among the portraits on the principal staircase are those of the late Mr. Edward Valentine Burnell, and of the Mrs. Burnell, his widow; of Mrs. Savile, and further up of Lady Cust, and of that William Burnell, who had a grant of Winkburn made to him so long ago as the reign of Edward the Sixth. Then the features of Mr. Gabriel Savile, and of another Mr. Acton Burnell, occupy other frames, and family portraits have become so numerous that for want of space they have been placed in out-of-the-way places. Besides the portraits, there are at Winkburn, some fine paintings, which perhaps have not been seen by

many beyond the circle of the family's friends, to say nothing of the few remarkably beautiful engravings which hang in different parts of the house. In the hall are two examples of Rosa da Tivoli's art, two interesting paintings by Valetti, one giving an exciting aspect of a boar hunt, the other showing the perfectly drawn proportions of a cow and calf. They have evidently been in the family for some considerable time, and so, in all probability have many of the others—a lovely landscape by Buhlman, a characteristic head—that of a boy, by Schalken, a collection of game by Cuyp, and a winter scene, looking like a snowed-up Swiss village, by Fidenza. Amongst the hall pictures there are some of Sidney Cooper's famous sheep, as well as a painting bearing the signature of Lukx, and in the library, over the mantelpiece, there is a very fine rendering of poultry which, without any authentic information on the subject, I venture to ascribe to Hondekoeter, whose works were all of this class, and showed a marked similarity. A companion picture to this I saw at Watnall Hall, and about its authorship there is no doubt whatever. There is a very fine chimneypiece of carved oak in the library, upon which an artist, centuries ago, by the look of the wood, successfully illustrated the process of cutting down a particular kind of tree for the purpose of extracting the oil which exuded from its wounded parts. In the dining room are some horses and dogs by J. F. Herring, upon whose works so much store is set, and two excellent copies of Murrillo and Guido, the latter of some stirring allegory which inspired the pencil of the master. In two, if not more of the rooms at Winkburn, there are some very striking drawings of animals—tigers chiefly, in different attitudes, which, though executed by an amateur hand, bear evident traces of artistic power of a very high order. These were done by the late Mr. Burnell during his confinement to the house, and the drawing is so firm and true, the perspective so good, and the conception of animal dignity so marked, that they are worthy to take a conspicuous place in any collection of pictures. There is a delightful tranquillity about this old house and about its shady shrubberies, which have been grievously ill-used during the severe winters. Many an ugly gap has the cruel frost left in the Winkburn pleasure grounds, and the injury is not one that admits of speedy remedy. In one part of the pleasure grounds is the grandest copper beech I ever saw—and for wealth of foliage and symmetry I do not think it has its equal in the county. It could not be in a better place to be seen, and when it is at its best no prettier sight could be desired. An immense retriever dog, appeared to have permission to make himself at home in the hall, and, lying at full length on the paved floor, looked capable of disputing the right of entrance with any unauthorised visitor,

WISETON.

AT Wiseton Hall I met a worthy old man, not “myriad wrinkled,” like the dumb servitor in Mr. Tennyson’s charming idyll, but keen-eyed, clear-visaged, and garrulous, who remembered the late Lord Althorpe, Chancellor of the Exchequer under the Administration of Lord Grey. Wiseton was for some generations the residence and property of the Ackloms, a family of some considerable consequence in the county, whose representatives took a pride in their estate, and spent much time in working improvements thereon. From them, it passed into the hands of Earl Spencer, who gave an Acklom heiress a title in exchange for her wealth. On the death of Lord Spencer, the estate was sold to Mr. Neville, of Thorney ; then it became the residence of Mr. Robert Manners-Sutton, who, like his predecessor, was a clergyman, and, until lately, it was the residence of the late Mr. Robert Laycock, M.P., whose father, a wealthy north of England magnate, purchased it some fifteen years ago. Lord Althorpe spent at Wiseton much of the time that was not occupied with the cares and anxieties of office. It was isolated, quiet, and out of the reach of official despatches ; not a sound to be heard but the music of wind-stirred leaves or the lowing of distant cattle. But the privacy of this Sabine retreat was constantly invaded by the disturbing influences of political life. Here at Wiseton the Minister would gather round him some of the chief officers of State, and the leading movement of the time—the Reform Bill—was discussed in that big dining room, where we lunched to-day. Lord Brougham was a constant visitor at Wiseton, and it is more than probable that Lord Melbourne, and Lord Palmerston himself, partook of the Nottinghamshire hospitality of the genial and cultivated holder of the national purse strings. At any rate, hither came the Lord Chancellor at this great epoch in the political history of the country, and it is more than likely that under this very roof, the outline of the first Reform Bill was conceived. Whenever Lord Brougham visited his estate in the north, he made a point of calling upon his distinguished colleague at Wiseton. Those were times of great excitement, and Lord Brougham, warmed with enthusiasm, would rise from the table, so my venerable informant told me he had heard, and strike his noble host on the shoulder when moved by any happy thought connected with the great and absorbing question of that day. The house was always full of company in those

days. It was a pretty retreat, and its lord was a man of refined intellect and rare social qualities. Lord Exeter, the Duke of Bedford, Lord Tavistock, Lord Normanby, Lord Ducie, and a host of other notabilities at times made it their home.

It may, perhaps, be taken as a characteristic of English life, that beautiful, as many of these country houses undoubtedly are, it is only during a few months of the year that they are occupied. If the head of the house has Parliamentary duties to attend to, it may be taken for granted that he only enjoys the sweet air which blows across his park for a very short time, and his fine house is left for many months to the care of servants. It is closed during the best part of the year, and the master is away when the rhododendrons are at their best, and when laburnums are raining their showers of gold. The late Mr. Laycock did not spend much time at Wiseton, and he pleaded guilty to absenteeism, but, he added, his absence was attributable to causes, different from those which operate upon Irish landlords. Indeed, he was popular enough amongst his tenants and neighbours, as he was amongst all who knew him. To the restoration at Clayworth Church, a work which was entrusted to Sir Gilbert Scott, the late Mr. Laycock contributed largely. He now lies buried within its quiet precincts. There are some fine stained-glass windows here, which Bishop Trollope has pronounced to be amongst the best in the county, and under the hand of the great architect, whose name I have mentioned, the building has been beautified, to an extent which has given it the deserved reputation of being one of the handsomest churches in the county. Through the stained-glass comes a subdued and mellow light, which falls upon a bright altar, covered with a handsome cloth, the gift of Mrs. Laycock. I merely mention Clayworth Church incidentally, but, as the family, residing at Wiseton Hall for the time being, must be considered, as in some manner, associated with the church, its appearance in this article cannot be considered out of place. And while here, one cannot avoid noticing the curious arches, which span one side of the aisle, and a very fine specimen of plaster-work, which appears in the form of a handsome tomb to certain of the Fitzwilliam family. A Roman road divides Wiseton Park from the farm lands, and makes a break in an admirable expanse of scenery, which is further diversified by the temperate course of the Chesterfield Canal, with its sedgy banks, and the most impetuous current of the river Idle, which makes its progress in graceful curves. On the estate are the few grey stones that are left of Mattersey Abbey, and half-a-dozen pleasant views, if one has time to enjoy them sufficiently. Mr. Laycock farmed some 400 acres of land on the best of principles, and, judging from the very prosperous and thriving condition of the horned occupants of a long range of stalls, he was a successful breeder of stock,

It may have been the genial qualities of Lord Spencer, and the amiable disposition of his lady, that brought so many distinguished persons to his lordship's hospitable board. It may have been the beautiful situation of the house, with the amusements and diversions it afforded, that caused Wiseton in this out-of-the-way part of the world, to be a popular house of call. But whatever the attraction may have been, certain it is that Wiseton Hall was never dull, and it was generally full of company. There was the park to range in, there was the game to shoot, there were the pleasant gardens stocked with fine trees and shrubs, ranging in pretension from a magnificent specimen of the fern-leaved beech of most elegant proportions, to the humble laurel and bay; there was the library with its choice collection of books, there was the social dinner table where politics were not excluded, and where the Reform Bill and the condition of the coverts were alike acceptable as questions of debate and controversy. The mansion has not materially altered since those days. The handsome paper which adorns the wall of the billiard room with a bright expanse of mural art, was brought by Lady Althorpe from Switzerland. The electioneering *canard* in the late Mr. Laycock's room, representing Lord Spencer and two other distinguished political figures of that day, has caused many a hearty laugh, and the queer-looking vane, which marks the wind's variation at the topmost part of the house, has been the subject of many a well-timed joke. This represents a favourite dog, to which Lord Spencer was so fondly attached, that when it died he had its exact shape cut out in tin, to be placed on the top of the house.


The dining room at Wiseton is a spacious apartment; square and roomy, and evidently designed to suit the taste of a man who appreciated the fitness of things. Four massive pillars give it a hall-like appearance; its looks over the park, commands a pretty bit of pleasure garden, and is abundantly lighted. On its walls there are some old portraits, which were in the house when Mr. Laycock came to it. Two of them, of Sir Thomas and Lady Whichcote are attributed to Lely, and they certainly bear some of the distinguishing characteristics of that great artist; and there is another of Lord Eustace Cecil, a member of the Burleigh House family. The drawing room is almost as good a room as that in which the family take their principal meals; indeed, they are two of the best rooms that are to be seen in the county. The drawing room is furnished with taste and elegance, and a vast and glittering chandelier of Venetian glass, which Mr. Laycock purchased in Venice during his travels, is not out of harmony with the character of the other furniture. Here, amongst articles of virtue, and a variety of pretty things, distributed about the room, are some pictures that one knows something about. There is a fine water-

colour of a Scotch deer forest by T. M. Richardson, a careful and breezy study of a special type of Highland scenery ; a water-colour sketch of the Forum, executed, on commission for Mr. Laycock ; an admirable pen and ink sketch, presenting all the firmness and truth of a modern engraving, by a local lady, representing a well-known scene in "The Two Gentlemen of Verona" ; and a study of game, by Richardson, a friend of Mr. Laycock's, whose paintings have found their way into many collections, from which indifferent work is carefully excluded. Among other works of art that ornament this beautiful room, is a splendid figure in bronze, bought in Rome, and representing Narcissus, who was over enamoured of his own water-reflected image. In the library there are plenty of books, plenty of luxurious seats, and a plentiful supply of agreeable light. Some of these books belonged to Lord Spencer, and are chiefly political treatises. Others have been added by Mr. Laycock, who made politics his special study. Mr. Laycock commenced life as a barrister, and went the Northern circuit. Like other sons of the wealthy, who do not adopt the legal profession for the sake of making a living, Mr. Laycock soon left the bar, and settled down as a country gentleman, turning his attention chiefly to politics. He tried to get into Parliament for North Notts., in 1872, but failed ; he tried for Nottingham at the general election of 1874, and failed a second time. But he was not the man to be downcast by defeat, and at the general election of 1880, he came forward at the eleventh hour to contest a division of an adjoining county. He pursued his canvass with an amount of pluck and zeal, not always manifested by county gentlemen of large fortune, and he turned out a man, whose family has long been connected with North Lincolnshire by territorial ties. Mr. Laycock was not a student though he did well at Trinity College ; but he was a shrewd, well-informed man, who was well up in those matters which ordinarily come under the notice of Parliament, and the interests of North Lincolnshire, to some extent, an agricultural constituency, did not suffer in his hands. A man of less ability, who had fought two hard and expensive battles for the Liberal party, would deserve to be rewarded and congratulated. After Mr. Laycock had obtained a seat in Parliament, he spent less time than ever at Wiseton. He attended assiduously to his Parliamentary duties, and his death, in August, 1881, was a matter of regret, not only in the constituency which he so faithfully represented during the short time he was permitted to enjoy the honour he had won so well, but amongst a large circle of friends and acquaintances.

There are some good engravings in this cheerful library, and a very fine medallion of the late Lord Spencer, whose distinguished descendant, now holding the seals of office, has been lifted to his pony, when a boy, by that very fine example of the "oldest inhabitant,"

to whom attention was drawn at the commencement of this article. There is an admirable print of Lord Brougham, and a fine engraving of Salvator Rosa's picture " St. John preaching in the wilderness." These I had an opportunity of looking at whilst my kind host was searching for a piece of information in a book, which he had reached from the well-stocked shelves of the library.

WOLLATON HALL.

OLLATON Hall, one of the stateliest mansions in England, has been without an occupant for long intervals during the later years of its dignified existence. It is one of five seats belonging to Lord Middleton, the head of the Willoughbys, and as his lordship cannot well be in several places at one and the same time, he is driven either to the necessity of letting certain of his houses, or of leaving them to the care of servants during most, if not all, of the year. The late peer seems to have preferred one of his Yorkshire seats to any of the four others in Nottinghamshire, Warwickshire, or Ross-shire in the North. Probably he was influenced in this choice of residence by sporting considerations; possibly he deserted this county because Wollaton may have been, to his thinking, too near the smoke and busy activity of a large manufacturing town. For this splendid house is now only removed from the borough by a narrow slip of country, and from its topmost places you may almost see what is going on in the heart of the town. But in spite of the near approach of the municipal boundary, Wollaton Hall preserves its county identity and its baronial individuality. Within its beautiful park, full of noble trees and grassy undulations, the deer roams in as perfect security as do his fellows in the unfrequented recesses of Sherwood Forest; timid wild animals feed within the shade of its massive masonry, and the cry of the pheasant issuing from one of the little plantations in the park, or the whirr of a covey of partridges returning from neighbouring stubbles, are sounds and appearances more suggestive of complete rustic retirement and security than of the near proximity of a busy centre of commerce. Few places that I know, have, or appear to have, advantages equal to those possessed by Wollaton. Here is a house of superb proportions, displaying in its imposing outline all the architectural beauty of a celebrated period, of which but few really noble specimens remain; provided internally with splendid suites of rooms and magnificent staircases, which have been decorated with forms of beauty by the trained and skilful hand of a Verrio; spacious park and extensive pleasaunces, quiet and private; and the life and attractions of a fine town within easy walking distance. But Wollaton Hall was unoccupied at the time of my visit, except by the family portraits, representing, in voiceless array, a long and illustrious ancestral line. For a considerable number of years during the

lifetime of the late Lord Middleton, Wollaton Hall was occupied by Mr. Henry Ackroyd, one of a wealthy Yorkshire family, and afterwards by Mr. Douglas Lane, whose tenancy was of short duration. Then again the mansion was empty, its halls silent, and its park unfrequented—

Deserted rooms of luxury and state,
That old magnificence had richly furnish'd
With pictures, cabinets of ancient date,
And carvings gilt and burnish'd.

In 1580, in the twenty-second year of the reign of Elizabeth, Sir Francis Willoughby determined to spend some portion of his wealth in building a mansion which should not only serve himself and his immediate successors, but which should remain a magnificent ornament to the landscape, and a great house of the county after the lapse of centuries. In those days the erection of a solid stone mansion suited to the requirements of a man of large estate and of exalted position, was a gigantic undertaking, and the building of Wollaton Hall was spread over eight years, much of the time being occupied, I should imagine, by the bringing of the stone from Ancaster, by means of the somewhat imperfect resources available at that period in the history of locomotion. This stone was obtained in exchange for coal, which the estate has always furnished. The superintendence of the undertaking was entrusted to John Thorpe, a celebrated artist of the time, who is said to have died during the execution of this, the last of his important works. It is related that Sir Francis himself was the designer of the plans. The outward features of the building are familiar to many who will read this article. It has repeatedly been described as square with four large towers adorned with pinnacles; and in the centre the body of the house rises higher, with projecting coped turrets at the corners. The front and sides are adorned with square projecting Ionic pilasters, and at intervals appear niches filled with busts of philosophers and other distinguished personages. Upon what information Camden stated that the building of this magnificent house sunk three lordships it would perhaps be impossible to discover, but it is pretty certain that the immense cost of the mansion must have proved a rather heavy drain upon the large resources of Sir Francis Willoughby, during the eight years over which its erection extended. The work, three centuries ago, was done with such completeness and with so adequate a view to the requirements of successive generations of a distinguished family, that very little in the way of alteration has been effected during that long period of time. The great hall has been altered to suit the taste of one of the Willoughbys, but in its general aspects the building is pretty much what it was when, on its completion in 1558, Sir Francis Willoughby went out into the park to get an advantageous view of its imposing proportions.

The great hall is celebrated throughout the county no less for the beauty of its architecture and ornamentation, than for the masterpieces of art which are ranged upon its walls. I am informed that the pictures at Wollaton only represent a portion of Lord Middleton's collection, though they are probably not the least valuable. Let us glance at a few of those in the great hall, and then take a hurried look at some of the pictures which adorn the walls of other apartments in this unoccupied mansion. In the great hall, with its beautiful screen supported by Doric pillars, and rich in ornamentation, the masters are represented. On these spacious walls which are so liberally lighted that none of the painter's art is lost to view, are three of Snyders' masterly compositions, representing various stages of the boar hunt, and showing all the life and spirit which that great artist put into his animal creations. At the end of the hall opposite the gallery and organ, flanking a large painting of Diana and her nymphs, which has been recently introduced, hang Neptune and Amphitrite, and Jupiter and Europa, the work of Luca Giordano, the disciple of Spagnoletto, who deceived the ablest connoisseurs by his unrivalled powers of imitation. This clever Neapolitan had a weakness for mythology, and these two pictures are perhaps as good examples of his surprising freedom of hand and agreeable tone of colour, as is his rendering of the contest between Perseus and Demetrius which once adorned a Genoese palazzo. The Boar Hunt, by Abraham Hondius, which has a place in this part of the collection, illustrates the universality of this painter's art, landscape or animal life being equally easy to him, and is worthy of the great Snyders himself. Here, too, are three admirable examples of the genius of Philip Roos, better known in the world of art as Rosa da Tivoli, who once painted a picture of sheep and goats in less than an hour to win a wager for his patron, an Imperial Ambassador, and received a considerable portion of the proceeds as a reward for his rapidity of manipulation. These three pictures are a herdsman and his flock, showing that skilful grouping for which the artist was noted; horses and cattle, and the well-stocked interior of an Italian kitchen. A large and very fine picture in another part of the hall, of lions disputing the possession of prey, is attributed in the catalogue to Rubens. Three of the great hall pictures, two pastoral scenes, and one named "Hunting the Wolf," are evidently the work of a master brush. They were purchased by the fifth Lord Middleton, and are supposed to have been brought from Italy by a person of distinction and judgment. The large picture of Charles the First is not by Vandyck, but it is a copy of that master and a striking portrait. Several of the pictures in the great hall possess a local interest. There is an excellent picture of Lord Howe's action, presented to the seventh Lord Middleton, who was first-lieutenant on board the "Culloden" in the celebrated action off Ushant; there is

another bearing date 1695 depicting the beautiful landscape about Wollaton and signed by Sibrects, and over the fireplace is a portrait of Sir Francis Willoughby who built the house, and whose portrait by Zuccherò hangs in the adjoining saloon. In this smaller saloon one gets an introduction to some of the earlier members of this old family, and is able to learn something of its lineage. Among this goodly company is Bridget, eldest daughter and co-heiress of Sir Francis Willoughby, who married Sir Percival Willoughby of the house of D'Ersby, and brought to him the greater part of her father's large estates. I do not know whether this is the same Sir Percival whose portrait looks at one from these walls and is backed by a strip of paper stating that its subject was "Lost by words, not winds or waves," a pictorial epitaph, if one may call it by that name, which is supposed to refer to his having been ruined by law-suits, as many another has been ruined both before and since. There was a Sir Percival Willoughby who represented the county of Nottingham in the first Parliament of James the First. The portrait of Thomas, the first Lord Middleton, is by Sir Godfrey Kneller. This gentleman served in six several Parliaments during the reigns of William and Anne and was ennobled in 1711, from which year the peerage dates. The portrait is associated with that of Cassandra, who was sister to the first peer and married the Duke of Chandos. Among the other portraits in this saloon are those of the fourth Lord Middleton, Prince William of Orange, and Letitia, daughter of Sir Francis Willoughby, who married Sir Thomas Wendy, a lady possessing not only many virtues and good qualities, but also considerable learning and attainments, and the subject of a dedicatory poem by one of the songsters of the time. There are, with these, other family portraits, and one of the young Prince of Bavaria. In company with these portraits hang Rubens' picture of Achilles, discovered in the Court of Lycomedes, whither he had been sent by Thetis in the disguise of a female, in order that he might escape being pressed into the Trojan War, in which he was afterwards to display so much bravery. This incident in the history of the Grecian hero was a fit subject for such a master as Rubens;—Ulysses in the guise of a merchant offering jewels and arms to the disguised hero, and discovering his sex from the choice he made. The feminine gauds, brilliant and glittering, were contemptuously rejected by the warrior who was to slay Hector, and himself to die of a wound inflicted in the only vulnerable part of his person. In the dining room there is a wonderful picture of dead game, with lobsters, oysters, and other delicacies of the table, and a large and somewhat singular composition by Sibrects, who has contributed largely to this collection. Into this the figure of a girl with a basket of freshly cut flowers is introduced. She appears suddenly to have come upon this lavish display of nature's substantial gifts, and to have

forgotten her flower mission in the contemplation of an abundance of fish which has just been taken from its element, and fruit and vegetables which have recently been removed from the parent stem and from mother earth. Here, among drolls and conversations and pieces of still-life by seventeenth century artists, is a further array of portraits. There are half-lengths of the sixth and seventh Lords Middleton by Barber, who was, I believe, of Nottingham origin ; of Sir Nesbit Willoughby, who lost an eye whilst fighting for his country ; of Sir Francis Willoughby, whose son was to become a scholar and philosopher, and of Lady Cassandra, a daughter of the Earl of Londonderry, who was married to Sir Francis. Among the other pictures in the room is a very amusing one by Sibrects, to which attaches a little story that is worth relating. It represents two boys eating hasty-pudding—a compound which is not often heard of in these days—and the larger boy has thrown a quantity of the mess into the eyes of his lesser brother. The injured youngster is crying lustily ; the other is very much pleased with his performance and is preparing to make a further distribution of pudding in the same direction. It is said that one of the late lords of Wollaton ordered this picture to be painted after he had seen the village boys quarrelling over their food which happened to be hasty-pudding. There is a characteristic painting of Hemskerck's—two jovial colliers, playing at cards. It shows that abundance of humour and lively and whimsical imagination, which Hemskerck's best known works display, and was probably painted during the period of his settlement in London. This is not the only painting by this whimsical Dutchman, which is to be seen in the Wollaton collection. The sick woman and her doctor, and a devout person saying grace before meat are attributed to him, and very likely some of the other smaller paintings which have been left to be taken care of here, are from his brush. There are also here several valuable and interesting illustrations of Dutch life—one a woman selling slices of salmon, for which she is evidently asking an extravagant price, of a lady whose notion of housekeeping is more frugal than that of David Copperfield's Dora ; another, a smaller one, a Dutch vegetable market by Palamedes. The great hall and the dining room claim the most interesting portion of the Wollaton collection of paintings, but as their position in the house is changed from time to time reference to their particular whereabouts will not assist in their identification. It must also be borne in mind that I am not attempting to furnish a catalogue of the Wollaton pictures. To do that successfully, one would need to spend more than a couple of hours in these rooms, but as the house is closed to the public, it seems to me that I might occupy most of the space allowed for this article with some of the impressions left by a brief inspection of the rooms and galleries. Among the pictures not already mentioned, is a scripture piece by

Rubens, the Shores of Capernium, painted on panel; a view of Middleton Hall, the Warwickshire seat of the family, and a number of portraits. Among these is one of Sir Hugh Willoughby, who perished in the North Seas, in 1553. He went out for the purpose of making discoveries in the Northern Ocean, with three ships fitted out at the private expense of the Society of Merchants, who had formed a company, in order to prosecute the search after a north-east passage to India. At Spitzbergen, one of the ships was separated from the others. Soon after the separation, Sir Hugh is said to have discovered land, but was unable to examine it on account of the iceflow. Sailing westward he came to a river and harbour where he decided to pass the winter. Here he and his whole crew perished, being unable to endure the hardships of that dreadful latitude. The portrait of Sir Richard Willoughby, who was Lord Chief Justice of the Common Pleas for the space of twenty-eight years, is also in the collection; as also are those of Sir Francis Willoughby, the first baronet, who built the fine stables at Wollaton in 1774, of Sir Francis Willoughby, the philosopher, of Lord Strafford and his secretary, which, along with several other pieces of the kind throughout the country, claims the mede of originality; of the second Lord Middleton in his Coronation robes, by Sir Joshua Reynolds; of Sir Thomas Wendy, who married into the family, and others.

The painting of the grand staircase—the most interesting portion of the house—is said to have been done by Verrio, who charged enormously for the numerous works which he painted in England, though few of his magnificent frescoes remain with us. At Chatsworth and at Burleigh there are to be seen examples of his superb art. The staircase is situated on the north of the building; on the ceiling Prometheus is represented stealing the fire from heaven in the presence of the gods and goddesses, who express their amazement at the sacrilege, while the walls are richly decorated with incidents from mythological history, painted by the same distinguished artist. These are some of the principal pictures which are to be seen by the rare visitor to Wollaton Hall, who, if his visit happen on a favourable day, will be pleased with the appearance of the park and grounds viewed from the windows.

In a county which possesses few really fine houses, Wollaton must always be regarded as a conspicuous and handsome piece of architectural ornamentation, and a splendid proof of the taste which prevailed in the Elizabethan era. Perhaps if a house of that size and pretention could be built in these days, the internal arrangements might be somewhat different to those which exist at Wollaton to-day. The principal rooms would probably be made larger, and perhaps less attention would be paid to inward ornament. But, be this as it

may, the praise which the sight of Wollaton Hall, standing bold and ornate, upon a commanding eminence, drew from one who does not often colour his relation of historical facts with rapturous outbursts, is not ill-bestowed. "Lovely art thou, fair Wollaton, magnificent are thy features ! In years now venerable thy towery-crested presence eminently bold-seated, strikes the beholder with respectful awe. Unlike many of the visionary building edifices of the present day, designed with but little variation of style and uniform in disordering architectural order, thee we must admire, chaste in thy component part, and possessing an harmonious whole."

WORKSOP MANOR.

MR. William Isaac Cookson, who has occupied Worksop Manor since 1874, belongs to a family, whose estates lie in a county, which a popular novelist tells us, with painful iteration, has gloomy forests, bleak shores, and wild uplands. He is a Northumbrian, and his connection with this county commenced when he came to Worksop Manor. It has been my custom in this series of articles, from such particulars as I have been able to gather, to give some account of the county families, and the space that, from time to time, has been devoted to these accounts, represents the most difficult portion of my task in connection with these visits to the Great Houses of Notts., because the materials I have been able to gather in the course of a brief conversation, even in cases where these have been supplemented by information in black and white, have been necessarily somewhat imperfect. As Mr. Cookson does not represent a Nottinghamshire family, I am spared much of this trouble in noticing his interesting residence. It may not, however, be out of place to mention this much concerning him, that he is the third son of Mr. Isaac Cookson, J.P., who was once High Sheriff of Northumberland, that he is himself a magistrate for this county and for Northumberland, that he formerly resided at Benwell Tower, in the last-named county, and that he was born in 1812. Mr. Cookson has been twice married, and has a family large enough, with some twenty servants, to occupy the suites of rooms, which go to make up this very large house. One of his sons, who is in the army, and was engaged in the Zulu campaign, has contributed some very interesting things to the Manor House collection of curiosities. In the billiard room, where some of the books are kept, there is a cupboard full of articles from Zululand—assegais, charms, shields, and other instruments of warfare and emblems of peace. In another part of the house a large number of weapons, more easy to name than those of the dusky savage, belonging to the same collector. These were picked up at Sedan, and have been arranged in a design on a crimson shield. Mr. Cookson has no famous pictures to show his guests. The walls of staircase and gallery are not taken possession of by grim and silent personages, representing the ancestry of families who have been connected with the Manor, nor do the rooms, with their elegant modern furniture, contain much of the painter's work. In the dining room there are one or two good

landscapes, and a figure or two, which are of Spanish or Portuguese extraction ; and over the mantelpiece is a portrait of the father of the present occupier of the house. A number of engravings, of more than ordinary merit, adorn the walls of the billiard room, and the other part of a choice collection of this class of art work is displayed on the walls of a small room, which is used by Mr. Cookson for business purposes. The subjects of these prints are of several classes ; the original of one of them belonging to that part of the collection, not on the walls of the billiard room—Bolton Abbey in the olden time—is in the possession of the Duke of Devonshire. In a house, which had been owned and occupied by the representatives of the premier dukedom in the English peerage, and had subsequently been the principal residence of the head of another noble family, one would almost expect to find some traces of former ownership, and a few things, either in the way of pictures, furniture, or books, which would serve to identify the house with those families, who had formerly made it their head-quarters. The Manor House of to-day is destitute of anything of the kind. There is nothing that belonged to the Howards ; and the Foleys, who lived there for thirteen years, left not a wrack behind, save a solid oak table in one of the kitchens, which, being unstamped with coat of arms or coronet, loses its identity, and it is only guesswork to say that it was formerly the property of the late Duke of Norfolk, or that it was introduced into the house by the late Lord Foley. The house had been empty some time when Mr. Cookson left his Northumbrian home to come to this big unfurnished mansion in Nottinghamshire, and the handsome furniture, with which it is filled, has none of it been in the house for a longer period than that which is represented by the interval between 1874 and the present date.

Worksop Manor, large as it is, only represents, as it were, the shell of its founder's original idea. If that idea had been carried out, it would, perhaps, have been the largest mansion in England. Until the early part of the seventeenth century, Worksop Manor formed part of the ancient estates of the Talbots. About that time a daughter of the seventh Earl of Shrewsbury married one of the Howards, who was Earl Marshal of England, and by this tie the Dukes of Norfolk became possessed of the Manor of Worksop, together with other property belonging to the Talbots. For many generations it was retained by the Norfolk family, until 1839, when it was sold to the then Duke of Newcastle, who took down part of the house, and divided the park, which was eight miles in circumference, and contained over a thousand acres. This park, which once formed part of Sherwood Forest, it is said, had many unusually fine trees, one of which was 182 feet from the extreme end of its opposite branches, covering more than

half an acre of ground. In the autumn of the year 1761 the original manor house, which contained about 500 rooms, was destroyed by an accidental fire, and damage to the extent of £100,000 was done, a large number of valuables, including paintings, and some of the famous Arundelian treasures, being destroyed. Worksop Manor, Kelham Hall, Thoresby Hall, and, lastly, Clumber, in this county, have all been destroyed by fire at different times. The fire at Worksop occurred at a time when the house was undergoing alterations, which cost the Duke of Norfolk about £22,000. The building that was designed to replace the one, which the fire had destroyed, was of magnificent proportions. At the Manor I saw a volume of the plans of Mr. Paine, the celebrated architect, with letterpress description of the many noblemen's residences, for which he had made designs, and among them are the engraved drawings from which Worksop Manor was to be built. It would be difficult to imagine anything more gigantic or elaborate, in the way of house building, than the structure which, according to the plans, was contemplated, and, if death had not interfered, Nottinghamshire would probably have been able to boast the largest nobleman's residence in the kingdom. Even when a fourth part of the design had been completed, the house was one of the largest in the county, and in this condition it was inhabited. It had a stone façade 303 feet long, in the centre of which was a Corinthian portico, supported by six columns. Some idea of its beauty will be gathered from the following description, which I take from an excellent guide to Worksop and the neighbourhood :—"A light and elegant balustrade surrounded the edifice from the tympanum to the projecting part of the ends, which marked the terminations in the style of wings, upon this were placed a series of beautiful vases, executed with great taste. In the centre was a sculptured pediment, on the three points of which were statues 'Virtue,' 'Peace,' and 'Plenty.' The sculpture has been described thus : 'The three animals denoted some of the well-known ancient alliances of the Norfolk family. They were emblematical : the lion is an emblem of strength and courage, the horse of generous ardour, and the dog of fidelity and vigilance. On the west side of the principal group was a distant view of the old Manor House, which, with all the furniture, and the rest of its contents, was consumed by fire, in October, 1761. The evening sun, the broken columns, and the shattered trees, were expressive of the devastation occasioned by the calamitous accident. On the east side, the whole appeared to be unhurt, or restored to its former beauty, which is expressed by the flourishing oaks, the sheep feeding, and the ploughman pursuing his labours. In the foreground of this part was represented the plan of the subsequent building, and some of the instruments employed in erecting the edifice.'" The sculptured pediment here referred to, which is of gigantic proportions, stands at

the present time in the farmyard attached to the Manor House. It is still in a fairly good state of preservation, and the carved figures are clear and well defined. Something less artistic would have served to keep the poultry within the bounds of the farmyard ; but it would be a difficult matter to suggest what should be done with such an unwieldy piece of masonry. The three huge statues, which were formerly placed on the three points of this pediment, now stand in the pleasure grounds in a not altogether perfect state of "repair." Even in its unfinished state the Manor must have been a masterpiece of house architecture, and it is said that some of the finest points were suggested by a celebrated Duchess of Norfolk, under whose superintendence the building was erected. In these days high-born ladies have other ways of spending their time, and architectural enthusiasm can hardly be catalogued amongst their weaknesses. The building has been described as one not unfit for a royal residence, although it has only one side of an intended triangle, which with two interior courts would have completed the plan. The apartments are numerous, elegantly furnished, and many of them very spacious. The furniture and other decorations were all in the ancient style of magnificence, with hangings and beds of crimson damask and sky-blue velvet, and there was a rare collection of tapestry.

The Manor of to-day, though it does not convey any adequate idea of the proportions and design of the Nottinghamshire seat of the Howards, is a building of considerable magnitude, and a convenient residence for a country gentleman who has an income sufficiently large to enable him to keep it up, and a family sufficiently numerous to occupy the many and excellent rooms which it contains. When the Duke of Newcastle purchased the property some forty years ago he caused, as I have said, the greater part of the house to be pulled down. After the lapse of some considerable time it was rebuilt, such portions of the old building that remained being converted into a good residence. For fourteen years the Manor was occupied by Lord Foley, formerly captain of the corps of Gentleman-at-Arms. This nobleman and his amiable lady are still remembered in the neighbourhood of Worksop, and there was a general feeling of regret when they left the county. In front of the house at the present time there is a piece of ornamental gardening which was planned by Lady Foley. It is designed in the form of the Prince of Wales's feathers, and it is an accurate and elegant bit of model gardening, which is best seen from the windows of one of boudoirs on the second storey. On the removal of Lord Foley from the neighbourhood, the house remained unoccupied for about four years, and then Mr. Cookson became its tenant, introducing bright furniture and a variety of pretty things into the rooms, so that Worksop Manor continues to hold its place among the great houses of this county.

The grounds of the present Manor House are certainly very fine, and no doubt they preserve some of the characteristics which charmed the eye of those who were fortunate enough to have access to them in the Duke of Norfolk's time, when the house was a centre of princely hospitality and refined festivity. There are some noble trees in the park, and on the lawn in front of the house there is a cedar of right royal dimensions, the diameter of its bole being fully five feet. The lawns are large enough to accommodate half-a-score sets of tennis, and they are kept in splendid order. In the gardens there is always plenty of colour, and from an abundant range of stove houses the Manor is kept constantly supplied with excellent fruit. The vanilla is here grown in as great perfection as, perhaps, it can be grown in England. The pods are of large size and of perfect shape. The kitchen gardens, too, are extensive, and their maintenance requires no small amount of labour and attention. Among the objects of interest to be noticed outside the Manor are four large and beautiful owls—one pair of the snowy variety, and a pair of great eagle owls, beautiful-eyed, large, and ferocious, such as haunt the gloomy pine forests of Norway. They are in excellent condition, their plumage being bright and closely set, and they took perfectly happy in their prison, which is attached to one of the wings of the house. Though they breed here, Mr. Cookson tells me they invariably destroy their young. The stables, coach-houses, and other conveniences connected with this department are built in the form of a quadrangle. A blank wall, about a hundred yards in length, embattled at the top, extends from the house to the gardens, and from the distance looks like a terrace. It is part of the old building, and viewed from the park, its effect is to make the house look larger than it really is. With regard to the mansion itself one is, perhaps, impressed with the idea that with its long corridors, into which so many rooms open, its ample range of offices, which do not represent part of the restoration, and its extensive ground floor, it would be desolate indeed in an unfurnished state. But filled as it is with handsome furniture, and occupied by an English county family, there is no room for such an impression. Perhaps the two brightest rooms in the house are the drawing room, which is furnished in the best of taste, where the effect of a singularly handsome mantelpiece of sculptured marble has not been spoiled by the character of its moveable surroundings, and a boudoir upstairs, which is appropriated by the lady of the house. This room is full of pretty things and on its walls are a number of excellent water-colours, several of which are Mrs. Cookson's own work.

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